MARK LOGAN,

THE BOURGEOIS.

BY

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"A story of well-known fact."

HORACE.

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CHAPTER I.

On a summer's day, one of the longest and hottest of the year, all the world was astir in the little frontier town of Detroit.

The twofold epithet with which we describe this now stately city will carry the reader back to a period when the century was yet "in its twenties;" a period when the great Northern Lakes were a barrier separating "the interior," as military people were wont to call the civilized world, from the almost unpeopled wilderness beyond.

These vast and magnificent waters had hitherto been traversed only by the canoe of the Indian, the Mackinac-boat of the fur-trader, or the small schooner sent out at intervals to transport supplies or troops to the upper posts, with, peradventure, the family and belongings of some emigrant hardy enough to tempt fortune in the fertile wilderness adjacent to the old French settlements of Green Bay and Prairie du Chien.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the announcement, "A steamboat for the upper Lakes," should cause a general sensation in a community where events were rare, and that high and low, rich and poor, should share in one general fever of excitement.

Who would be coming from the East under favor of

such an opportunity for visiting scenes hitherto locked inexorably from the pleasure-seeking traveller? Would any of the gentler sex venture themselves on board the craft of the redoubtable Captain Blunt? Or might it, by some chance, have come to their knowledge that this Autocrat of the Lakes had, upon one occasion, ordered a timid lady passenger into the small boat, and actually towed her for a considerable distance at the stern of the schooner he at that day commanded, by way of teaching her courage?

The hotels of the goodly little town (there were but two deserving the name) were holding high holiday in their unwonted accession of guests; for all who could had flocked in from the settlements around, to gaze on strangers or salute acquaintances, as the case might be; while the citizens, on their part, with the customary hospitality of frontier life, immediately on the arrival of the "Uncle Sam," threw wide their doors to visitors, and with parties, drives, and merry-makings, were soon recommending their Western home as the most delightful in all Christendom.

So all was, as we have said, "astir" at this happy season. The streets were filled with officers in uniform, ladies in their most fashionable attire, humbler citizens in their holiday garb—a gay, happy concourse, bringing to the mind of any transplanted son or daughter of Connecticut that glorious old election-day, when all the world swarmed to Hartford to witness the entry of the Chief Magistrate, on his way to take the oath of office. Who can forget those resplendent platoons of "Governor's Guards," in their white-and-red regimentals, formidable buff caps, and dusty velvet gaiters, as they seemed to carry the interests of the whole State at the point of their bayonets? And do not our consciences give us a twinge as we recall how, like little reprobates, we would keep ourselves snug in our

convenient station by an upper window, and gaze patiently over at the meeting-house steps during the long prayer and still longer exhortation of the chaplain, instead of trooping in with the procession and edifying? But this is a digression.

Such of the strangers as had not been fêted and made much of were at length growing impatient as time wore on and the departure of the Uncle Sam for Lakes Huron and Michigan was deferred, the excellent captain having, in answer to importunate inquirers, set the period of starting at the indefinite point of "whenever he was ready." It will not be wondered at that there began to be a good deal of grumbling, not always in the choicest terms, among those who were travelling on their own business and at their own expense. There were some, however, to whom the delay brought no discontent,—the commissioners, for instance, for the settlement of some question of disputed boundary between certain adjacent tribes of Indians: these, being paid by Government at a generous rate *per diem* for fulfilling their duties, ought to have been in haste to reach the scene of their labors and finish what was appointed them to do; so far were they, however, from complaining of their detention, that one would actually have believed they thought each extra day a very capital thing, and that they even would not have murmured could the delay have been made to cover extra mileage as well.

There were military officers, too, returning from furlough, who, in all conscience, should have been longing to be at their posts, drilling their companies and going their rounds of daily and nightly duty; these, if the truth must be told, exhibited a deplorable indifference to the possible state of the regiment in their absence, and never once, as far as could be observed, pestered Captain Blunt with de-

mands that he should hurry matters and speed them on their way.

As for the bevy of young engineers who were being sent up to explore the localities and bearings of the rivers and natural harbors along the upper frontier—instead of dilating with impatience upon the claims which the safe navigation of these waters had upon their prompt attention, they followed the example of their betters, and took the goods the gods provided, without a word of remonstrance; while the young ladies, of whom there were a few, accepted with resignation their share of the gayeties and diversions, and abstained from troubling either their escorts or the captain himself to put an end to their duration.

It may be that one and all appreciated the stupendous amount of preparation necessary to insure the safe passage of the little steamer (she seemed a giant in those days) across the tempestuous waters of Thunder Bay and Saginaw, and through the perilous tossings of the long stretch beyond Michillimackinac, until she should double, at length, that fearful point, "Death's Door," which guards the entrance to the green and tranquil expanse upon whose bosom all their fears would be lulled to rest.

The hour for departure, "sartain this time," was at length announced, and the passengers were notified that they must be promptly on board the Uncle Sam, if they wished to sail in her, at midnight.

An evening party at the Governor's was to be the climax of the series of hospitalities. The breaking-up at an early hour, the changing of toilets, possibly a scramble for berths after the company should arrive on board, were matters of minor consideration. Who ever, at that day, gave up a party on grounds so insignificant?

Among the travellers who, failing to find admission at the principal hotel, had been fain to accept that of the long,

rickety, yellow structure which held the second place, was a young man in military costume, but with so little that was soldierly in his air and bearing, that one saw at a glance he was a novice in his profession. For some reason, his brother officers had apparently taken no pains to secure his companionship at the Mansion House, where such as had not friends were quartered, and he had, whether accidentally or not, been left out of two or three of the pleasantest of the entertainments that had been given. These omissions may account for the discontent visible in his looks and manner, and also for the readiness with which he seized upon any tangible subject of complaint, whenever he could find a person obliging enough to listen to his criticisms and animadversions.

"I don't think much of this town of Detroit," he remarked, as he paced up and down the shabby parlor of the hotel, on the last afternoon of his sojourn. "It is a very contemptible little one-horse place—not a quarter as large as New York. I'll be hanged if I believe it's as large as Brooklyn, even."

The listeners to whom the remark was addressed were a short, stout man, with a good-natured face, spite of the ardent color of his hair and complexion, and his wife, a thin, faded-looking woman, much dizened with finery of a by-gone fashion. They had been fellow-travellers with the young officer from Buffalo, but all their overtures towards an acquaintance had been superciliously rejected until now that he was driven to condescension by grievances with which he craved sympathy. The wife took up the word.

"Contemptible? I quite agree with you. A little, insignificant place, not to be compared to Cattaraugus! I am terribly disappointed in it; not that I see much of it, to be sure, mewed up in the house as I am with these two

children. Gussy, do shut your eyes and go to sleep. How you do worry ma! And the weather hot enough to bake a body alive! I wonder if they always have such hot weather out West? Being kept here, too, at expense all this time. This is the fourth day——"

"The third, Mrs. Hale," corrected her husband.

"Well, the third—it amounts to about the same thing. I dare say they'll make us pay a whole week's board."

"Then the longer we stay the more we gain," said her husband, pleasantly.

"Yes, Mr. Hale, I should think that would be just about one of your ways of making money. But I, for my part, shall be glad to get away. All the time I've been here there's not a single soul been to call on me, or ask me so much as to break bread in their house. I wonder what Mr. Slater meant by going on as he did about Western hospitality, when he was advising us to come out and take up a farm on some of his land?"

"I guess he meant that we should make a purchase," said Mr. Hale.

"Well, I must say," continued the lady, "that I think the inhabitants are standing in their own light when they treat strangers in this sort of way. There is no saying but what, if they had behaved as they ought, we might have made up our minds not to go any farther, but have settled down among them. However, if they've no more sense of what is due to people who have come so far and given up so much of what's civilized and comfortable, why, the fault's their own, and they must take the consequences, —that's all I've got to say."

"They seem to be a very merry set of people, anyhow," observed the husband; "plenty of visiting, and music, and all that sort of thing."

"Yes, oh, yes," said the young officer, with an air of

assumed indifference, "there is no want of entertainments, as I suppose they call them. I have been invited to several, but I can't say they are much like what I've been accustomed to."

"No, I dare say not," was the lady's emphatic assent. "The girl" (meaning the chambermaid) "was describing some of them to me—she seems to think them wonderfully grand; but I don't imagine they are much like what *you've* been used to. Judging the people by what I see out of my window, I should call them downright outlandish."

"Certainly," responded the young man, "there can be no dispute about that—everything in the place is outlandish. I rather think my sister Lavinia would laugh if she were to look at some of the hats and dresses that parade the streets. I don't think I've seen a real, genuine Navarino since I've been here—and as for a bishop sleeve, I don't believe they would know what it meant if you were to ask them. Nothing but legs-of-mutton, which are all gone out. Oh, there's nothing that's the least bit like Broadway!"

"Well, I must say, I think the meals are uncommonly good, at any rate," remarked the married man. "I quite like those great fish we have at breakfast, and the venison-steaks, and what they call prairie-chickens, are first-rate."

"I'm glad you like them," said the young gentleman, with a superior air; "I can't say I'm fond of wild game, unless it happens to be at a dinner at Sykes's or Niblo's. As for eating fish without anchovies, who ever heard of such a thing?"

"To be sure! Who indeed?" exclaimed the lady, wondering very much at the same time what anchovies could be. "That is what I always say—how can people fancy things they are not accustomed to? I don't like what I

have to put up with here, because I'm not accustomed to it. Being shut up in this way, without society, and with the care of these two children——"

"I'm sure, Mrs. Hale, I offered to take care of the children and let you walk out to take a look at things," interposed her husband, good-naturedly.

"Walk out all alone by myself, in this strange place?" screamed the lady. "Why, I might have wandered off into the woods and got lost!"

"You wouldn't if you had kept in the streets, my dear."

"Well, in the streets some great Indian might snap me up and tomahawk me! Such things have happened—the girl was telling me of several instances. One was of a beautiful young lady who was walking along in the dusk of the evening, when a great, overgrown Indian, with nothing on him but a blanket, rushed round the corner and scalped her before anybody could snatch her away—and the poor thing has had to wear a wig ever since."

"Dear me! can that be true?" said the young officer, in an agitated tone. "I had no idea that such things were practiced nowadays. Was it lately that this happened?"

"Well, I think," said the lady, not wishing to be disagreeable to her companion, "that she did say it was during the war, some fourteen or fifteen years ago."

"Oh! that alters the case," said the officer, with a sigh of relief. "Still, I must say, I wish myself back in Bowling-green Place, with all my heart."

"Bowling-green Place! Is that where your people live?" asked the lady, with an air of interest.

"Yes—in the city of New York. It is the place where the most wealthy and fashionable people live—quite the most elegant part of the city."

"Is it, really? How delightful it must be to be so

elegant! I dare say your people live splendidly! What did you remark their name was?"

"Oh, Mrs. Hale! upon my word—that is what I should call a leading question," said the husband, laughing. "Not that I'm ashamed of the young man's knowing that my name is Hale, and that we come from Cattaraugus County. I'm above asking for any more than I'm willing to give."

"I'm sure I've no reason to be ashamed of *my* name," said the young man, drawing himself up. "My name is Lieutenant Smithett, of the United States Regular Army. My father is Alderman Smithett, the great hide-and-tallow merchant. I dare say you have heard of him. I'm pretty sure you must have read of him in the papers, for he ran once for mayor of the city, though, owing to the fraudulent conduct of a majority of the voters, he was not elected."

"Dear me! how shameful! I hope he never ran again; I do like to see people paid in their own coin," said the sympathizing Mrs. Hale. "But do tell me how you came to leave such a splendid home and wander out into this miserable, uncivilized country."

"Why, the fact is," said the young man, "that my father, for all he's a man of such wealth and standing, has some queer notions; and one is, that young men ought to be doing something for themselves, and not be hanging on to the old folks. For my part, I don't see, if fathers have made a fortune, why their children shouldn't benefit by it, and live at their ease; but that isn't my father's doctrine. So, as my mother and sister thought the Army was a very genteel profession, and one easy to get along with, I concluded to try it. I had undertaken to study law once, but it did not agree with me—it was too dull and confining."

"Well, really, now," Mr. Hale ventured to say, "I

should have thought you would have found West Point a deal more confining than a law office."

"Ah, but, you see, West Point was a thing we managed to get rid of. My father, being a man of wealth, has a great many friends in Congress, and he got some of them to speak to the President to give me what they call a citizen's appointment; so I did not have to go through that disagreeable four years' preparation."

"You are lucky—and if that way will do just as well, I wonder so many of our young men are willing to go through that long apprenticeship by way of learning their military profession." There was a touch of sarcasm in Mr. Hale's remark, which was, however, quite lost upon the lieutenant.

"Ah, but you must remember that it is not every man who can get such a favor for his son. It is only a chosen few," he explained, with a grand air, which greatly enhanced Mrs. Hale's esteem and admiration.

"It is plain to be seen," she exclaimed, fervently, "that your father could have anything he wanted for just asking. You are accustomed, I know, to everything that is handsome and genteel—of course you must be very much surprised to see *us* travelling in this poor way, without a girl or anything of the sort, and me taking care of the children myself. I assure you I feel it very humiliating—but the truth is, I tried very hard to get somebody to come out with me, but I could not succeed. Girls seem to have grown so grasping! Perfect Jews, as one may say! We could not, of course, just breaking up, and looking for a new home, offer a great deal in the way of wages; but then the advantages of travelling, and the experience that a young person would gain in such a journey, ought, as I remarked to Mr. Hale's mother, to count for something. And she quite agreed with me,—which is what she doesn't often do."

"Experience counts for something, but wages is the easiest reckoned," observed Mr. Hale, sententiously.

"Well, these creatures," continued Mrs. Hale, without noticing her husband's interruption, "they wouldn't look at you except for a price that I considered exorbitant and was principled against giving; so I showed them my independence, and came off without them. And now, here at the West, I find it much the same thing. I have been talking to the girl to try and find me somebody to whom wages wouldn't be much of an object, but she has not succeeded, and here I am—left in this mortifying situation!"

The young officer had been walking about in a rather fidgety manner while Mrs. Hale rehearsed this explanation. Perceiving that he did not enter with any degree of sympathy into her individual troubles, she quitted the subject, and returned to one which she knew would fix his attention.

"Did you ever see people get about as they do here?" she asked.

"Get about? Do you mean their walking? Isn't it like other people's?"

"I'm not talking of their walking, but their riding. I was looking out of my chamber window just before dark yesterday—of course, being shut in with the children at their bedtime, I've no other amusement—but that is my misfortune, not my fault—I was looking into the street, and what should I see coming along but a cart!—a one-horse cart!—a little, common, square cart! And sitting down flat on the floor of it were two ladies; at least, they were dressed like ladies. The cart drove up before the door of that large brick house just above here, and what does the driver do but wheel round and back up his cart and let out his load, just as if they had been two barrels of potatoes! The ladies, if you will believe it, shook out their

skirts and ran into the house, just as if it was something they were quite used to!"

"You don't tell me so!" exclaimed the young man, with a look of intense disgust. "A cart! a common horse-cart! Well, all I can say is, that I hope my father will apply to Congress to get my station changed. I don't at all relish the idea of having to associate with such people——"

"And the worst of it is," chimed in Mrs. Hale, "to think that these very people have, like as not, got girls at home to take care of their children."

The sound of voices and steps in the hall betokened the approach of company. The young New Yorker drew away from the immediate vicinity of Mr. and Mrs. Hale, and stationed himself at the farthest window, looking out in the direction of the river, as if that were the only object that had at any time presented itself to his aristocratic contemplation.

Poor Mrs. Hale, finding herself thus unceremoniously thrown into the background, lost no time in gathering up her sleeping children, and, with her husband's aid, transporting them to her own apartment.

CHAPTER II.

THE quaint and venerable mansion of the Governor stood, as did many another delightful, old-fashioned residence, a little below the town, on the banks of the broad, beautiful river.

The shore opposite was dotted with the homesteads of the old Canadian families, and ornamented, at frequent intervals, with odd-shaped little red windmills, kept in almost

incessant motion by the counter-currents which form so peculiar a meteorological feature of this region. The white sails of the few small vessels passing and repassing gleamed and glittered against the blue of the waters, while far away in the landscape rose the little Huron church, the work of saintly missionaries gone long years ago to their reward.

Gardens and orchards, planted by former generations, surrounded the mansion, and trees of age immemorial drooped over its long, low, mossy roof, and, with the vines which climbed around its small-paned windows, embosomed it like a bower. Nothing more picturesque and attractive could be imagined than its outward aspect,—nothing more genial, refined, and inviting than its hospitable interior.

The social reunion which was to herald the departure of the Uncle Sam was, of course, in compliment to the strangers recently arrived. Among these were two young ladies—sisters—now on their way from Quebec to their home on the Mississippi. They were accompanied by an elderly French or rather Canadian gentleman—their neighbor at home—and they were ostensibly under his care; though a slight observation was sufficient to show that the elder of the two Miss McGregors was the person who had charge, not only of her younger sister, but also of M. Tremblay himself.

The impression produced by the sisters may be gathered from fragments of a conversation between two of the young engineer officers, and a secretary of the Governor who was acting as master of ceremonies on the occasion.

"Which of the two Miss McGregors do you think the handsomest?" The question was from Captain Lytle, and was addressed to Mr. Ewing, the secretary.

"Oh, the younger, by all means. I always prefer a blonde to a brunette. I admire, particularly, that light,

wavy brown hair, and—no—upon the whole, I cannot say I give the preference to blue eyes, though Miss Madeleine's are very soft and beautiful. Then her manners are so graceful and winning, so sprightly and piquant, yet without any touch of forwardness."

"Well," said Captain Lytle, "I dare say I should be as much captivated as the rest of you, only that I have, myself, a decided *penchant* for a brunette. If I had been Lord Thomas I should at once, and without ado, have gratified my lady mother by 'bringing her the brown girl home.' Give me the large, dark eyes, full of fire or of languor, according to the sentiment of the moment—and surely no one ever saw a pair more gloriously expressive than those of Miss McGregor when her face lights up in conversation, or more touchingly pensive when her features are in repose. Her life, by-the-by, has not been a holiday, if I am anything of a Lavater."

Mr. Ewing smiled. He was not on sufficiently intimate terms with Captain Lytle to rally him on the eloquence those eyes had inspired. That gentleman continued:

"Who are they? Tell me something more about them, will you? You have lived so long in the country you must know everybody. I confess to no small degree of curiosity upon the subject. I had little expected to meet, in my expedition, anything so queen-like."

"I can tell you nothing more than what you have doubtless already learned: that their father is a partner in the American Fur Company; that he resides at or near Prairie du Chien, in a good deal of the old colonial style; and that he has these two daughters, who are his only children."

"What countryman is he? His name is Scotch, yet the eldest daughter has a good deal of the Spanish look."

"That she may inherit from her mother. I think I have heard it said that Mr. McGregor married a native—a Win-

nebago, if I mistake not; and there is, occasionally, in that blood a cross of the Spanish—remote, of course, as there have been now some two or three generations since that race gave place to the French on the frontier."

"Pardon me, but may you not have been misinformed as to the mother?" said a junior officer who had hitherto listened in silence. "It is impossible to admit the idea that the younger sister can have Indian blood in her veins. What can be more perfectly fair and transparent than her complexion? Look, too, at the color of her eyes and hair!"

"That may all be, and not disprove the mixed blood," said Mr. Ewing. "You will meet many, particularly among those who have a cross of the Sioux or Menomonee, who retain not the slightest trace of their aboriginal descent."

"The countenance of the elder sister gives token of both intellect and strength of character," observed Captain Lytle.

"Have you no surer means of judging than by looks?" asked Ewing. "I have seen you several times in her company already."

"True, but only at these merry-makings, where there is so little of any conversation but mere rattle; where a sensible observation sounds out of place and pedantic. Scenes of amusement, you know, are great levellers. The cultivated and the *mediocre* appear very much alike if their movements are equally graceful and their tones of voices equally musical."

"If your last-named attraction were the criterion, Miss McGregor would surely bear away the palm," replied the secretary. "You cannot but have been struck with the peculiar charm of her voice, so soft, so melodious in its tones."

"I dare say I should, if I had heard it unmingled with

the chatter by which we are always surrounded. A conversation in which I can fully appreciate it is a happiness in reserve for me, as we are to be fellow-travellers across the Upper Lakes."

This was said lightly, and at the moment the young master of ceremonies moved away to attend to a party of newly-arrived guests.

"I find it difficult to credit what Mr. Ewing has been telling us," said Lieutenant Stafford, his eyes still fixed on the younger of the sisters. "I would give a good deal to know if it is true."

"Why don't you ask somebody whose word you can credit, then?" said Lytle.

"Why, it doesn't seem to be just the thing to be asking questions of that kind. I suppose I shall find out about it one of these days."

"As you seem so much interested, I can put you in a way of satisfying yourself at once," said the captain, in a bantering tone. "Go to the young lady and engage her in some conversation that shall have our red brethren for the leading topic. You can soon detect by her manner whether she has any personal interest in the subject."

"If what we have heard is true, the introduction of such a theme might give offence."

"In that case your curiosity would be satisfied—you would have your answer."

"I do not care to purchase satisfaction on such terms," said the young officer."

"Just as you please," said his companion. "Only, as treaties, and tribes, and cessions of territory happen to form so much the staple of conversation just now, it strikes me that one might find a way to say 'Indian' without an air of premeditation. Besides, it is not to be supposed that they are ashamed of their aboriginal descent. I rather

imagine they are proud of it. However that may be, as my sensibilities are not particularly enlisted in the facts of the case, I shall go and put in for my share of notice from the elder one—and if I find out anything," he added, in a jesting tone, "I will let you know.

The young lieutenant colored. He would gladly have followed the light-hearted captain, but diffidence restrained him, and he remained gazing across the room to where the sisters sat, so surrounded by more adventurous admirers, that it was only now and then that he could catch a glimpse of the fair countenance which was the subject of his speculations. A band was playing upon the piazza, and some of the young people, regardless of the heat, or the crowded state of the rooms, were proposing a dance.

Miss McGregor had declined more than one invitation, but she rose when Captain Lytle approached and offered his arm with the suggestion that in the open air of the piazza they should enjoy not only the music, but the perfume of the garden and orchard.

"Yes, we will move away," the young lady said, with ready complaisance, "and give room, so that they who like to dance may not be incommoded."

She looked around for her sister, who was ready with a petition.

"May I dance, Monica, if they make up a set?"

Mr. Stafford, from admiring the captain's audacity, had, at length, found courage to imitate it, and was now sufficiently near to hear the answer.

"No, Madeleine—I had rather you would not overheat yourself. You are going soon into the damp of the river, you know."

The tones of the voice were soft, the purport of the words kind, yet the icy coldness of the manner, and the absence of all apparent sensibility to the effect of her re-

fusal, struck the young officer with a feeling almost of dislike to the dark-eyed beauty.

There was a slight shade of disappointment on the young girl's brow, which deepened as her sister, in a low tone, which yet was wonderfully distinct in its clearness, said,—

"Monsieur!"

Her obedient squire, M. Tremblay, was in a moment by her side. A few words in French, finishing with two or three still more emphatic in an unknown tongue, were answered by a profound bow. Their import might be guessed from the color which spread itself over the younger sister's face, and from the stately air with which M. Tremblay took her arm within his own, drew up his tall form, and looked about him with a grimace of solemn triumph.

"Now, nobody shall dare come and say word to you," pronounced he, speaking in English, that he might display his proficiency in that language. "All dese young gent', dey do be de wolf, de big, hungry prairie-wolf" (with an extraordinary projection of his huge, hanging under-lip), "and you is de nice, pritty leetle sheep. Bum-bye come de wolf to catch you, den I make him one face!"—he suited the action to the word in a way that might have intimidated the boldest—"and dey shall all run 'way, tout de suite—jus' so quick he can!"

"Oh, dear M. Tremblay, mustn't I speak to anybody but you?"

"Pardon—you shall speak one, two, tree leetle word. I not be afraid of nobody's tongue—me. I keep fast hold of you, den no harm shall happen. Let me see who look innocent. Do you like to go talk to dat young, nice officer who stand by de stair? No? Den you shall not. Shall we tell dis oder one he may stop?"

"No, no, monsieur!" said Madeleine, her brow clearing. "We will only go a little nearer the door, where we can breathe the fresh air—it is so warm here."

Mr. Stafford, who had retired a little at her sister's forbidding look, was now again by her side, and the two by degrees fell into a conversation unembarrassed except by the studious efforts of the young officer to avoid any word or allusion that would call up the subject of predominating interest with him at the moment.

Our acquaintance, Lieutenant Smithett, was of the company, and the time did not now hang heavy on his hands. He found abundant food for criticism, and for inward self-gratulation, though, as all the world were occupied in the pursuit of happiness after their own fashion, he had little opportunity for making known the result of his observations.

Seeing him standing aloof, Mr. Ewing approached him and inquired, "Have you become acquainted with most of the young people? I see you are looking at our prairie-belles, as we call them, those two young ladies who are just moving towards the door. Shall I introduce you to them?"

"I have been *presented*, I thank you," said the young gentleman, correcting the secretary with emphasis. "I don't find myself so much smitten with their beauty as some of the other beaux appear to be. The little one is rather pretty—her dress, too, is genteel enough! White always passes in a crowd—it never looks exactly old-fashioned. Rather an odd style the other has chosen for this season of the year!" He regarded Miss McGregor with the deliberate air of a connoisseur. "Those are meant for sanguinea roses in her hair, I suppose. I wonder where she picked up that bright-colored challié of her dress—or is it a barége? I can't exactly tell at this dis-

tance. I suppose she doesn't know that both those sorts of material are getting rather passés."

"But they agree very well with her complexion and style, which are quite Oriental. Brilliant colors harmonize with such, better than those which are more subdued. Just fancy her a Sultana, and you will admire her choice."

"I could never admire anybody in coral ornaments on such a hot evening. Besides, nobody wears coral now, unless it may be children."

Mr. Ewing, who knew very little of these things, and cared less, hastened to change the subject. He had hardly uttered a remark, when, a new theme of animadversion occurring to Mr. Smithett, he plunged at once into it.

"Holding the position you do, here in the Governor's family, I should think you would be terribly annoyed that the people do not provide him with a more suitable dwelling. It is really too bad that he should be permitted to live in this old weather-beaten, tumble-down place. So small and contracted, too, and such low ceilings! Why, if your town should some day be civilized enough to have gas, you could not hang a chandelier at all. I wonder he puts up with it."

Mr. Ewing, at first, opened his eyes with astonishment; then, amusement taking the place of surprise, he said,—

"Perhaps you do not take it into consideration that *our* Governor has no right to be proud. We are only a Territory,—we are not a State yet."

"Oh, I had forgot. Well, that may make a difference," remarked the young officer; "but still, such a kind, respectable man as this seems to be, ought to have a decent home. At Albany our Governor has a most splendid mansion—brick, and three stories high. How is it that your people don't feel a little ambition in the matter?"

"But you must understand, my dear sir, that we belong

to the General Government, and that it is the duty of the people at Washington to take care of us. Perhaps the President has a spite towards us, which he wreaks in this way."

"Oh, if that is the case, I think I can help you. My father is very intimate with several members of Congress; he would have no objection to ask them to speak to the President. I will write to him, and tell him how polite the Governor has been to me, and I am pretty sure the old gentleman will interest himself to get him better provided for."

"I thank you very much, in the Governor's name," said Ewing, with perfect gravity; "but that is a step which I think we must deliberate upon. The Governor, like other men, has his fancies; and one is, for living in his own house, old and unfashionable as it is. It would incommode your father's political friends to send a committee to remove him by force into a new dwelling; and yet I cannot see how, otherwise, the object would ever be accomplished."

"Oh, well, if he is so obstinate as that, there is nothing but to let him have his own way; but I could tell him there's not a plain farmer on Long Island, or in West Chester County, who would live in such a shabby sort of place as this."

Ewing had no more time to waste on Mr. Smithett; he soon left the young gentleman to his own reflections. These, after a few minutes, prompted him to turn and address a bright-looking young lady who, seated near, had overheard the dialogue between himself and the secretary. The smile which she could not quite subdue was misinterpreted by the lieutenant.

"She looks," he said to himself, "as if she knew what was what. I don't think she's from New York, for I've never met her there. But I dare say she may have been

there on a visit; she looks like it." Then aloud, as he took his station still nearer to her, "I believe you are one of the company going up the lakes, Miss Latimer?"

"Yes. Are we to be fellow-travellers?" was the reply.

"I suppose I've got to go—I'm ordered to join my regiment. It would have been much pleasanter if I could have been allowed to stay at the East, recruiting, as my captain has been, I understand, for two years past. Don't you repent of your bargain in undertaking this journey?"

"Repent?" exclaimed Miss Latimer, with animation. "No, indeed; why should I?"

"Why, ain't you afraid you shall get dreadfully tired of this new country?"

"Certainly not. On the contrary, I expect to be constantly more and more delighted. I have enjoyed myself already a thousandfold more than I anticipated, although I am but on the very outset of my adventures. I am prepared to be in a continuous state of rapture when I get to the wild woods and prairies, beyond the bounds of civilization."

"Well, I can't say I understand your enthusiasm. The prospect has no such charms for me; and as for adventures, I am sure I hope and pray we are not going to meet any of *them!* And there's a lady who is very much of my way of thinking, I guess. She's my captain's wife, and I was presented to her down in Buffalo; but she's hardly been decently civil to me. That shows either that she's out of sorts or isn't much accustomed to behavior. I believe you are travelling with her—well, you needn't count on having a very pleasant time with her. I'm tolerably penetrating. I always say to myself, if a person can't be polite and civil, there's some reason or other for it—something more than meets the eye, as the poet says."

Miss Latimer would have been vexed at the little fel-

low's impertinence, if she had not been so much amused. She gravely replied,—

"Mrs. Lovel is a good deal out of health; it is no wonder she looks careworn."

Not silenced, Mr. Smithett went on,—

"Do you know much about military affairs?"

"Very little."

"Because, if you did, you might be a great assistance to me. I know, of course, a good deal about the army, having been for several months a member of one of our crack corps—the Manhattan Grays; and I have been drilled, and paraded, and reviewed, and all that sort of thing; but still there are some few things about garrison duties, and customs, and fashions, you understand, that I should like to find out a little about, before I undertake to enter on them. Of course it's not to be expected that I should be posted up exactly, like those who have been at it, day in and day out, for four years at West Point. I suppose these officers that I have been travelling with pride themselves very much on their knowledge; but they may keep it to themselves for all me. I sha'n't ask them any more questions; I've made up my mind as far as that is concerned. Every time I did try to find out anything, when we were on our way up from Buffalo, they would stop talking, or walk away, or something of the kind——"

"Were the questions about military matters?" Miss Latimer could not help asking.

"Well, no—not exactly; that is, not always. I was not likely to say much about such subjects, after I overheard them sneering about *citizen appointments*. The fact is, they are envious, one and all, because I have got into the service without the drudgery they have had to undergo —that's what's the matter with them!"

CHAPTER III.

AMID rush and bustle, the noise of carts, drays, and barrows upon the dock, the squabbling of hackmen and porters, the ringing of the bell, the fizzing of steam, the shouting of sailors and boatmen, with the stentorian voice of Captain Blunt, like the blast of a trumpet, supreme above all, the motley crowd of passengers found their way along the encumbered gangway to the deck of the Uncle Sam.

"I sympathize with you, from the depths of my heart," Captain Lytle found means to whisper to the elder Miss McGregor, as, carefully making her a passage through the heaps of baggage which barricaded the entrance to the ladies' cabin, he threw a glance beyond the open door.

His quick eye had taken in the figure of Mrs. Hale, looking ruefully as she administered a primitive castigation to her eldest hope, by way of removing his objections to being tucked away up on a narrow shelf high above herself and the baby.

"There, Gussy—ma's sorry; but you must be a good boy, and not worry her. She's got enough to put up with, without that."

Not far distant stood a compact, sturdy, sharp-nosed little woman, arrayed in a tight-fitting habit of olive cloth, elaborately braided, and a green silk calash which should have stood erect upon her head, had it not been tossed half-way down her back, in her agitation at finding her own allotted place of repose already occupied.

The cunning passenger who had thus taken time by the forelock, feigning sleep or deafness, remained totally unmoved while the irate little woman addressed to her ques-

tions like the following: "What she thought of herself?" "Whether she had not a speck of principle?" "What would she say when the captain should come with a posse of the hands and pull her out of the place she'd been a scrouging herself into?"

Finding no impression produced even by the latter threat, the injured party turned her artillery upon the cabin-maid.

"I should like to know, Biddy, how you came to let a mean, cheating, no-account person come and sneak into my berth, before ever I co uld get aboard! Do you think that, with my little, short legs, I'm going to climb 'way up to the *ruff* of the cabin, just to accommodate a great, tall—yes, I see she is tall—look at her long legs!—she has to fold herself up there, against the panel! Now, I should like to know what you think Captain Smart will say! He came and put down my name the very first one, after the boat got here — I'm number one with him, always. I wouldn't give much for your chance, if he finds out this trick of yours."

Biddy, who had her fee snug in her pocket, attempted no defence except the quiet remark, "Folks has to go down to their tea sometimes."

"Let me give you my berth—it is a lower one," said Miss Latimer, anxious for peace and quietness for the sake of her friend, Mrs. Lovel.

"You are quite welcome to mine. I prefer an upper one, on account of the window which is in it," said the younger Miss McGregor.

"Madeleine, I prefer you should retain your own berth next to mine," interposed her sister, awaking from the reverie into which the parting tones of Captain Lytle had thrown her.

"I've no wish to discommode other people, I'm sure. You are very good, but I won't impose—I don't relish

being imposed on myself," said the little lady, in a softer tone. "But when a body's husband has taken his choice and put down her name! My husband is the sutler at the Prairie, and I'm going up to the Bay with him, and, if I like it, I may go all the way over to the Mississippi; but he won't stand my being treated in this way, and Biddy there knows it, for we've travelled backward and forward with her again and again. And I'm not over-given to putting up with things myself."

"That's true," said the sententious Biddy; and she busied herself with arranging the berth which should have been Miss Latimer's, and which, after some little further show of opposition, Mrs. Smart accepted. Gussy's whinings having been silenced by a judicious application of a few pieces of confectionery from her travelling-bag, Miss Latimer had at length the comfort of seeing matters in train for a season of repose.

"Does Miss McGregor never allow her sister to stir from her side? and is it from pure affection that she is so watchful?" were questions that occupied her thoughts for awhile, until all ideas became vague and indistinct, to be gathered more clearly in the dreams of innocence.

And while she thus slumbers, let us introduce Miss Latimer more fully to our readers, and declare the errand with which she was journeying over these vast and untried waters.

Grace Latimer, though young in years,—she was not yet twenty,—possessed a more mature character than is commonly found at so early an age. Nature had given her acuteness of perception, education and circumstance had improved her powers, and prepared her to act her part in life with decision and courage. She had been early left fatherless, the youngest of three children, and her mother, with a straitened income, would have found it difficult to

rear her children suitably to the position in which they were born, had it not been for the kind assistance of a brother of her husband, Colonel Latimer, an officer in the army. This gentleman had married a wealthy lady, who, dying without children, bequeathed to him a large fortune. After some years he married again, and again was left a widower, with an only daughter. This child, in whom his whole heart was bound up, he fain would have placed under the care of his sister-in-law, for whom his sentiments were those of profound respect as well as affection. But his suffering wife, on her death-bed, had entreated him to promise that her own mother should have the privilege of rearing her little girl, and he had not the heart to refuse. Living with the grandmother were two maiden aunts, who all united in spoiling the unfortunate child thus intrusted to their care.

The colonel had been firm in one stipulation, namely, that his little Edith should spend at least two months in every year with the aunt and cousins, whose efforts, he hoped, would help to weed out the evil germs which he foresaw would be implanted by over-indulgence, and which, ere many years had passed, he found to have taken deep root.

Mrs. Latimer was conscientious in her labors to counteract the mischief wrought by the other relatives, who, in the father's absences with his regiment, had full sway; yet Colonel Latimer had the grief to see his beloved daughter growing up to womanhood less amiable, less disinterested, and far less well-informed than her cousin Grace. As for the cardinal domestic virtues of industry, economy, and love of order, Grandmamma Cleveland and Aunt Sarah and Aunt Rebecca scouted at the idea of such homely virtues being insisted on. "I'm sure it's our greatest pleasure in life to wait on her," they would say; "then why should the poor little thing tire herself to no purpose? As for all

this talk about saving and sparing—how ridiculous! when her father, every time he comes to see her, gives her more money than she knows what to do with! There is no need of quoting that everlasting Cousin Grace. Of course economy is very well in Grace—just the thing; but for our little precious, who has got plenty and more than plenty, it would really be too pitiful to be always pinching and paring!"

Upon one occasion her father, by way of teaching her the proper value of money, cut short, in some degree, the allowance his Edith had been spending so lavishly. He had the mortification to find that, in order to fill the stinted purse of their darling, the expensive first-rate music-teacher had been quietly dismissed by the aunts, and a cheap little novice substituted. A system like this, inevitably defeating all attempts to inculcate right principles, showed Colonel Latimer that a stand must be taken. A friend, who was aware of his perplexity, counselled marriage with the widow of his brother, as a measure that would secure for his child a home and influences such as he desired; but not even for her sake could he have meditated a step against which every feeling and principle revolted—a step which he knew his sister, equally with himself, regarded as unlawful.

With earnest persuasions, and even with bribes to complete the bargain, the colonel obtained from the relatives the privilege of sending his daughter to a boarding-school for the last two years before bringing her to preside in his home, which happened, at the expiration of that time, to be the pleasant and not yet ultra-fashionable watering-place of Newport.

Having held her position with great éclat at the head of her father's establishment for about one year, Miss Edith Latimer formed the acquaintance of, and, to use the most

appropriate phrase, "fell in love" with, a good-looking, shallow-pated young coxcomb in shoulder-straps, who, next to himself, did really prefer the colonel's daughter, and who, in less time than a more modest man would have dreamed of, paid her father the compliment to make proposals for his only child. Colonel Latimer met the offer with a flat refusal. He believed Lieutenant Holcomb to be unprincipled as well as vain and silly, and he had no intention of confiding his daughter's happiness to the keeping of one so unsuitable. So the pretty Edith was told that she must at once give up all idea of encouraging such a lover, and Mr. Holcomb was civilly invited to abstain from future visits, the father wisely fearing that the occasional sight of his handsome face and form (they were all that he had) might beget a contumacious spirit on the part of the young lady.

Two days later, Lieutenant Holcomb disappeared from the gay circle of Newport; but he did not go alone. The colonel, deceived by his daughter's apparent acquiescence in his objections, had been induced to accept an invitation to dine in town; he returned to the fort at evening, to learn that his daughter had been absent some hours—gone, no one knew whither. He traced and pursued the fugitives to Albany, where he found them already married, and preparing to set off for the frontier garrison home of the young officer.

Though indignant and almost heart-broken, yet, as he could not help blaming himself for the facility with which he had confided the early training of his child to such incompetent hands, the father, after the first outburst of anger, forgave his headstrong child, and provided for her comfort by the bestowal of a sum greater than she deserved, though far less than the young lieutenant expected or married for.

The post to which the thoughtless couple repaired was

not among the most distant on the frontier, and, for the year that they continued at it, the occasional letters of Mrs. Holcomb to her father breathed no spirit of dissatisfaction with her lot; on the contrary, they were filled with details of the frolics and amusements in which she habitually participated, and one would have gathered, from their style and tone, that she found in the connection she had formed, and the circumstances which surrounded her, all that her heart could desire.

After a time came a change. "The unexpected removal to a distant garrison"—"the impossibility of getting servants"—"the hardships of a life where supplies were difficult to be obtained, even by those whose pay was *far beyond* that of a poor lieutenant"—finally, "the ill health," "the loneliness," "the wretchedness!" Desertion or indifference on the part of her husband was not hinted at; but, "Oh! if she had but one friend to sympathize with her! one single link to the home she had given up without realizing what she was indeed resigning! Where was dear Cousin Grace? Was she married and happy? And had she forgotten poor Edith, whom she once loved? How sad to have no sister, that one could feel a freedom in inviting to share one's solitary home for a time! So many of the ladies of the garrison had sisters or cousins to come for a season and enliven their lonely hours!"

Grace read the letter which the colonel brought for their perusal. She looked up in her uncle's face. She thought of her brother educated, and now just started in life by the aid of that kind relative—of her mother's amended income—of the many advantages which, but for him, could never have been hers or her sister's; but most of all she remembered the fatherly kindness with which he had watched over every step of her life, and helped her mother to train her for usefulness and happiness.

There was a struggle as she thought of leaving that mother and the beloved, pleasant home—it was but for a moment. Looking up with a bright smile, she said, "Do you wish me to go to Edith, uncle? Is that what you would prefer?"

"Yes, my dear, it is indeed what I should wish, though I should hardly have dared to propose it," said her uncle, with emotion. "You are a noble girl, Grace; may God reward and bless you! You little know what you undertake; but of this you cannot fail to assure yourself—that next to myself you can best comfort and perhaps benefit my poor wayward child. Sorrow may have disciplined her, and there may yet be bright days in store for us."

An opportunity of travelling West, under the escort of Captain and Mrs. Lovel, was soon after embraced by Miss Latimer, whose uncomfortable forebodings in regard to her cousin were, in a measure, dissipated by the assurance of Mrs. Lovel, that the worst attacks which Mrs. Holcomb suffered from were, she believed, "fits of the blues."

CHAPTER IV.

It must have been instinct which told Miss Latimer, on the following morning, that the sun was beginning to cast his beams across the waters, for every ray of light, as well as every breath of fresh air, was excluded from the little cabin. Not alone were heaps of baggage and freight piled in such a way as almost to close up the principal opening, but cords upon cords of wood, which were to furnish fuel until the Uncle Sam should arrive at the far-distant island

of Mackinac, were packed into every available nook, effectually darkening the little windows.

According to an agreement on the previous evening, Grace wakened her young friend, and both were proceeding to make their early toilets by the dim light of a japanned lamp which stood upon the table, when the soft tones of Miss McGregor's voice were heard:

"Is that you, Madeleine? I had rather you lay quiet in your berth till the bell rings for the passengers to rise."

"But, Monica, it is so hot and close," pleaded the young girl. "I have hardly been able to breathe all night, and the smell of the lamp is so stifling!"

"What the rest of us can bear, you will be able to, I dare say," was the calm reply. "To go out upon the deck before M. Tremblay is ready to attend you, is a thing not to be thought of."

"Bless your heart! if you are afraid of anything happening to your little sister, I'll take care of her for you. I promise you I won't let any harm come to her," said Mrs. Smart, who was already astir, and energetically screwing herself into her olive-colored riding-habit.

The obliging offer was quietly but resolutely declined, and Madeleine could only seat herself wearily in the rocking-chair until the wished-for sound of the bell should bring release in the shape of the tall, gaunt Frenchman.

"Shall I wait for you, dear? I don't care for going out just now," whispered her new friend.

"Oh, no," said the young girl; "it is not worth while. Go now, if you please; I will join you by-and-by."

Miss Latimer did as she was desired, yet chafing inwardly, and murmuring to herself,—

"How absurd! I wonder if all Western people are so suspicious and so queer?"

Mrs. Smart's comments were more audible.

"That dark-complected young woman isn't over-and-above agreeable, for all she's so pretty-spoken. I'm sure her little sister looks innocent and sensible enough to be trusted out of her sight. Well, it takes all kinds of folks to make a world, they say."

There seemed to be but one way of enjoying the beauties of Nature, even after they were out upon the deck, and of that Miss Latimer availed herself. Defying all the perils of dirt, turpentine, and splinters, she climbed upon a huge box, and with some difficulty forced an opening through one of the piles of wood, where she could peer out and catch a glimpse of Lake St. Clair, over whose calm, lonely waters they were now passing.

Mrs. Smart would fain have followed her, but, her *physique* presenting formidable obstacles to such an enterprising search after the picturesque, she was obliged to cast about for some other source of amusement. Suddenly a thought struck her.

"Gracious me! what are we thinking of? There's the promenade-deck—that's the place for a Christian to go to!" she exclaimed, rather irreverently. "Come, I'll pilot you. We shall have it all to ourselves, and it's a most a splendid place for a view; and even a good snuff of the morning air is worth going for."

The last suggestion was irresistible. Descending from the elevation on which she had been perched, the young lady followed her guide as she threaded her way to the open space amidships, then clambered up the stairway which, steep, narrow, and exposed, led to the upper deck.

Two gentlemen were already promenading there. Her companion being in advance, Miss Latimer was able to retreat, as she hoped, unseen, and at some hazard made good her footing on the floor below. Mrs. Smart stood

her ground for a comprehensive survey of all within range of her eye, before reluctantly following the example of her companion.

"Why, what in the world did you turn back for?" she exclaimed. "One of those gentlemen looked so pleased when he caught sight of you! I'd have give a good deal if you'd only have stayed a few minutes longer! There is something that I wanted you to look at, 'way off at the farther end of the deck. I took a good squint at it myself; it's all covered over with a great black oil-cloth. What in the world do you suppose it is?"

"Some luggage or freight, perhaps. They have covered it, probably, to keep it from being rained on."

"Don't you believe it's anything of the sort. If it was baggage, why shouldn't they leave it down here, along with the rest? and if it's freight, why didn't they put it down in the hole? That tall officer, that looks as if the earth wasn't quite good enough for him to walk on, seemed to have been showing the other young man what was underneath; and what looks mysterious, too, is, that as soon as I popped my head up the stairway and caught them at it, they kind o' walked away. Now, what in the world *do* you suppose it can be?"

Miss Latimer had no theory upon the subject—it was one that did not particularly interest her; and, to Mrs. Smart's disappointment, she, without further speculation, returned to the cabin, to attend to the comfort of Mrs. Lovel.

After breakfast the company generally repaired to the promenade-deck, a delightful refuge from the heat and gloom of the cabins. An awning had been stretched as a shelter from the fierce rays of the sun, and under it ladies, officers, commissioners, and civilians were soon seated—some reading, some playing chess or backgammon, some

engaged in conversation, according to the humor of the moment.

Miss Latimer, ardent in all her feelings, was quite enthusiastic in her admiration of the youngest Miss McGregor—"So sweet, with such arch, pretty ways! And she seems frank; yet, somehow, she is not expansive, as I imagined a Western girl would be. On the contrary, there seems now and then a shade of reserve. I wonder whether it is from having lived in Quebec? The English are proverbially so reticent! Or possibly it is because she is so kept down and watched so closely by her sister."

Such was her mental rehearsal of Madeleine's qualities, as the latter sat, pencil in hand, trying to catch, as well as the constantly-shifting position of the jarring, puffing little steamer would allow, the finest points of the varying landscape.

"How lovely that opening is!" exclaimed Miss Latimer, as they were passing a glade of peculiar beauty. "How magnificent those trees on the farther verge, just drooping to meet their own image reflected in the glassy waters! How strange and grand the feeling is, as one gazes on the vast solitudes, and thinks of them as untrodden, perhaps for years together, by the foot of man! But you are more accustomed than I am to scenes and images like these. On the Mississippi, in the neighborhood of your own home, there must be so much that is wild, and vast, and romantic! Oh, how you must long for your home!"

"Yes, to see papa—*he* is my home! You remember that I have no mother," said Madeleine, with an expression of sadness shadowing her fair brow. "I love the Mississippi, and our lovely prairie—yet I have been very contented away from it. Doesn't that seem strange?"

"I do not think boarding-schools, as a general rule, quite

fill the place of our own homes," said Miss Latimer, laughing.

"Oh, it was not in the school that I was so happy—it was in my vacations, that I always spent with friends of papa's."

"Were there young people in the family, or were the friends of your father's age?"

"Mr. Lindsay is about my father's age—Mrs. Lindsay died about a year ago—not long after my own mother. I think a similar grief bound us still closer together."

"A similar grief? Mr. Lindsay's and yours?"

"No, no—Mr. Lindsay's two children—they were my dear friends—Clara and Malcolm. Clara is but three months older than I am."

"And Malcolm?"

"He is five years older—rather more than five years."

"How grieved they must have been to part with you!"

"It was a very sad parting between Clara and me. Her brother was away before that time."

"And he will return to find his little friend gone!"

"When he does return," said Madeleine, and, as if to change the subject, applying herself busily to her pencil.

Miss Latimer, however, was bent upon learning more of this young friend, or, rather, of the young friend's brother.

"You will have the happiness of hearing from them from time to time, for of course you will correspond?"

"I do not know—Clara will write if her father approves."

"Approves? You can hardly doubt that."

"I should once have thought so, but when we were planning how constantly we should hear from each other, her father remarked that we should soon have enough of the serious duties of life to put romance out of our heads."

"Mr. Lindsay must be a very practical person," re-

marked Miss Latimer. "Does he class the correspondence of the sister and brother under the head of romance?"

"I think not," was the brief reply.

The conversation was here interrupted by the approach of Mr. Stafford with a late magazine, which the absorption of Madeleine's appointed Argus, in a game of euchre with Captain Lovel, left him free to offer to the ladies.

Mr. Ewing had been early taken captive by one of the commissioners, who, proposing to write a book after his return to the civilized world, was making diligent use of his time to extract from one who had passed his life upon the frontiers a mass of *aboriginal* matter with which to swell and embellish his production.

"I shall squeeze him as I would a lemon!" had been his remark to the Governor on hearing what had been the young secretary's facilities for acquiring knowledge that could be thus made available. So, instead of enjoying, as he had designed, the sprightly conversation of Miss Latimer, the poor young secretary was condemned, during the long, tedious summer forenoon, to undergo a course of catechising which was anything but congenial to his taste.

Mrs. Smart, in the mean time, had found in Mrs. Hale a sympathizing spirit in regard to the subject of her morning's observations. Together they gazed from a distance upon the mysterious black oil-cloth, which still stood its ground upon the upper deck, and together they speculated upon the wonders, or the horrors, it might possibly enshroud.

"I declare, I don't know what I sha'n't begin to believe about it," whispered Mrs. Hale, with a shudder.

"Particularly," responded Mrs. Smart, "as we can't help seeing that the tall officer there, though he pretends to be so taken up with that darkish young woman, keeps his eye fixed on everybody that so much as walks towards

it. What if it should be gunpowder, or something of that sort, to blow us all up?"

"Oh, my dear gracious! how you do make me creep! Of course, if there wasn't something wrong he wouldn't be on the watch so," assented Mrs. Hale.

"It certainly looks very black. I've a great mind to ask Smart what he thinks about it," observed one lady.

"And I Mr. Hale," said the other; "only if I speak to him it may put him in mind to give me back those two children to take care of."

Later in the day, when the passengers had refreshed themselves with a *siesta*, they were again assembled on the promenade-deck. It seemed to have become Miss McGregor's turn to contribute to the stock of information which the commissioner was accumulating.

"Now is the time," said Lieutenant Stafford to himself. "In a conversation like this, something must certainly be elicited to confirm or contradict what Ewing hinted at last night."

He drew near enough to hear Colonel Babbitt, the commissioner, remark,—

"I shall probably see but little of the Winnebagoes on my trip, it not being in contemplation to hold a treaty with that tribe at present."

"That is well," was Miss McGregor's quiet comment.

"And why so, my dear young lady? Do you not look forward with solicitous impatience to a time when the whole of our magnificent country will be open to the footprints of civilization?—when the wilderness shall rejoice and blossom as the rose? I should have supposed that in your home in the Far West you would welcome the consummation of measures by which our enterprising emigrants can be secured in the quiet enjoyment of their frontier possessions; when the bloodthirsty

savages who now so fearfully jeopardize their lives and property can be transferred to some far remote region, and the tomahawk and scalping-knife no more reek with the blood of the victims of their barbarity."

Miss McGregor's cheeks were all aflame while the commissioner thus pompously harangued, rather the company than herself. Her chest heaved, and her eyes shot forth a light beyond even their ordinary brilliance, as she repeated,—

"Savages? Bloodthirsty? And who, sir, made them such? Were they not peaceful—were they not quietly happy—when, as lords, they trod the soil which their Almighty Father had given them? And even now, when another race has come with arts to circumvent them in their simplicity, to trick and cajole them out of their homes, till there is scarce a resting-place left for them upon the face of the earth, would they not be still a peace-loving and a dutiful people if the cupidity of the white man were not ever on the alert to snatch the last sordid morsel from the mouths of their wives and their little ones? Is it not enough that the ploughshare has turned up the bones of our fathers—yes, sir, I speak for *my* people, *my* race—is it not enough that your Government has wrested from my people their homes, their villages, their beautiful lakes and islands and prairies, but that one in whose veins runs the blood of these unfortunates must be called upon for congratulations at the prospect of their utter extermination?"

"Oh, pray, pray pardon me, madam!" exclaimed the thunderstruck commissioner. "I am sure I had no idea —not the slightest intention—I would not for all the world——"

"No, sir, you would not have spoken your thoughts aloud—that I can easily believe. But has it never occurred to you to question whether a judgment is not per-

haps laid up in store for all the violations of faith practised, all the injustice permitted, all the heartless outrages winked at, in order to gain a territory, the God-given inheritance of a people to whom the gentler arts of life could in time have been taught, and they made useful and happy citizens?"

"Again I must ask your pardon," said the commissioner, who had by this time recovered something of his ordinary self-complacent manner. "But have you not forgotten that it is the various tribes themselves who have, from time to time, divested themselves of portions of their territory by their own free will—a treaty on the part of Government securing to them a just equivalent for what they thus cheerfully yielded?"

"Forgotten? No. But you are, I dare say, not a novice, sir," replied Miss McGregor. "You can tell me what a treaty is. First, a surreptitious influence exerted over certain of the tribe who have fallen into the snares and perhaps the vices of their more accomplished neighbors; next, an assembling, on an appointed day, of such as are expected to be practicable tools, and an entering into stipulations which are to be held complete and irrevocable—all this before, in answer to a tardy summons, the recognized chiefs and leaders of the tribe arrive, to find their council-fires, and graves, and hunting-grounds gone and they themselves compelled to accept some remote, desolate tract, too worthless to tempt the white man for yet a brief season to drive them once more from it."

"I am afraid you take too exaggerated a view of the matter," said the commissioner.

"The Governor, who sits there beside you, will tell you that I do not. He has ever been the friend of our race. He understands our wrongs, and sympathizes with them; but he is not the Government. If the power of redress

lay in his hands, there would be some hope; but what can he do singly?"

"Still, my dear young lady, it is a problem—a problem. Who can solve it? When God, in his providence, sent the Anglo-Saxon to this continent, he sent him in his recognized nature—aggressive against ignorance and barbarism. His mission was to conquer the waste, howling wilderness. Has not the bard beautifully sung, 'Westward the star of empire takes its way'?"

"Then will God's providence, since you call it such, also nerve the avenging hand of the victim, as it has already done. Often and often will that star, of which you are pleased to boast, be quenched in the blood or stifled in the smoke which marks its progress! It is for coming generations to testify whether the foundations of an empire thus laid shall prove stable and sure."

Miss McGregor walked to the guards on the farther side of the promenade-deck, and, slightly supporting herself on the railing, remained for a time gazing far away over the western waters. Her sister looked after her a moment, then rose and followed her, and would have taken her hand.

"Do not make a scene, Madeleine," said Monica. "Return to your place; you cannot enter into my feelings. Why should you appear to do so?"

"Indeed, I do enter into your feelings of grief and distress. Why will you not allow me to assure you of it? Why do you so invariably act as if I were something that in no way belonged to you?"

"And do you? Well, if you will not return without me, I will accompany you. I shall not give those whom I despise the triumph of thinking they have moved me."

Subduing by a mighty effort all appearance of emotion, Miss McGregor walked calmly back with her sister, and, seating herself, commenced a conversation on some ordinary

topic with her and Miss Latimer in her customary soft and gentle tones.

"By Jove! she's a most splendid creature!" Captain Lytle declared, mentally, as he followed with deep interest her every word and movement. "*There's* character! *There* is power! Upon my word, I could worship her! Indeed, I think I *do* worship her! But yet—to hear her proclaiming herself one of the race!" He gave a little shrug.

"And so she really is of that blood, after all," thought Lieutenant Stafford, looking after Madeleine. "*She* does not seem to glory in it. I think I should be better pleased if she did. And yet I don't know—it is hard to say."

CHAPTER V.

BEFORE tea-time Mrs. Smart had a new recruit in her crusade against the black oil-cloth.

While peering about, in company with Mrs. Hale, they chanced to espy Mr. Smithett, sauntering amidships, and waiting for the first sound of the tea-bell, that he might slip down and secure the most comfortable seat at table, before the descent of the rest of the passengers.

The people who fed the furnace had by this time removed a portion of the wood which had formed so uncomfortable a barrier around the cabin-door, and there were now nooks here and there, for snug little confidential conversations. Taking advantage of one of these, the sutler's wife drew Mrs. Hale aside, but not before the latter, feeling that the momentous circumstances of the case justified an abandonment of ceremony, called out, eagerly,—

"Oh, Lieutenant Smithett—do come here a moment.

We have got something so terribly particular to tell you! Mrs. Smart, Lieutenant Smithett, of Bowling-green Place —Lieutenant, this is Mrs. Smart, wife of the principal sutler at Prairie de something—I can't justly recollect, this minute; but at such a dismal time a body can hardly recollect their own name, rightly."

Her nervous manner begot a corresponding trepidation in the young officer. "What is it?" he asked. "Anything the matter? Anything going to happen?"

Mrs. Smart, without circumlocution, imparted her suspicions, or, as she called them, her moral certainties, of there being some dreadful mischief a brewing; and she gave the details of all she knew and all she suspected. The young gentleman turned pale as he gasped,—

"Gunpowder? You don't really think so? Why, good gracious! What if there should come up a thunder-storm, and it should strike, and blow us all to atoms?"

"Or what," said Mrs. Hale, turning up her eyes, and looking as if ready to be sacrificed, "what if they should be carboys of vitriol? They might burst of their own accord, on such a hot day, and set the decks and the steamboat all alight, before we could turn round to help ourselves!"

"Why, it's positively infamous! I'll go and blow the captain up about it, this very minute," said Mr. Smithett, stamping in his excitement.

"No, no; don't you do that. I'd never advise anybody to try their hand at blowing up Captain Blunt. Why, he'd make no bones of having one of the boats alongside, and setting you ashore, all alone among the bears and the tigers, on the first point of land we come to. Whatever we do, we've got to speak the captain fair. Let me alone for finding out whether they've got any gunpowder aboard, and if not, I've my plan for to-morrow morning, if you two will only stick by me."

Full allegiance and co-operation being promised, Mrs. Smart went cunningly to work, and, by virtue of a slight fee to one of the waiters, she secured a seat at the tea-table close beside the captain, from whom she, in the course of the meal, contrived to extract the fact that there was neither gunpowder nor oil of vitriol on board.

Mrs. Hale and the young lieutenant heaved sighs of relief when informed of this; nevertheless, they were rather gratified than otherwise when Mrs. Smart vehemently asserted,—

"For all that, there's something wrong! You stick to me, and I'll engage to find out what it is."

When the company assembled at the breakfast-table on the following morning, Mrs. Smart was not among them, nor did she make her appearance until the meal was nearly over. When she, at length, glided down and took her seat, there was that in her manner and countenance which told that a discovery had been made. She could not eat, but by a silent gesture, as they were leaving the table, she invited her colleagues to follow her, at the same time laying a detaining hand on her husband, that he might join the conclave.

"And now, Smart," she began, as soon as she had got the trio out of hearing of the other passengers, "I hope it's the last time you'll set up to contradict *me*. I told you I knew there was something there'd no business to be, under that black oil-cloth; and what do you think it is?" She did not give her husband time to guess, but exclaimed, triumphantly,—"A dead body! neither more nor less than a *corpse!* And people presuming to bring it along with us—on board of *this* boat—in *this* hot weather! Why, it's enough to kill every mother's child of us!"

Ejaculations of horror from the lieutenant, and from Mrs. Hale a faint "Oh, my gracious! Gussy, don't pull so

at mommy's hand, dear—you'll upset me right off of my balance!"

Mr. Smithett presently recovered himself.

"A dead body!" he exclaimed. "How dare they take such a liberty with respectable people's lives? It's positively outrageous! Let's go and speak to the Governor—he must have full power here, even if this isn't anything more than a Territory. It's his duty to have that coffin pitched into the lake at once!"

"And the folks who brought it, after it!" said the energetic Mrs. Smart.

"Now, will you listen to reason?" began Mr. Smart.

"Listen to reason? No, indeed," interrupted his wife. "Do *you* listen to the truth. Here I've been telling you, for this last twenty-four hours, that they'd got something they'd no business to have, up there. I began to mistrust what it was last evening—I had to keep a putting up my handkerchief and smelling at my bottle of Preston salts—but, then, I said, maybe it's only bilge-water."

"Oh, dear me!" groaned Mrs. Hale.

"Yes," pursued Mrs. Smart, "you would keep on saying 'nonsense'—so, now, if you'll just step up on deck with me, all of you, that's all I ask."

"The best way is, certainly, to go up on deck and see if we can get to the bottom of the matter," said the imperturbable Mr. Smart.

"Wait a minute for me, till I just run to my berth and get my bottle of camphire," pleaded Mrs. Hale.

"Fortunately, I always carry a vinaigrette with me," said Mr. Smithett, with an air that was meant to be indifferent, but which did not disguise the tremor with which he drew a little, gilded trifle from his pocket and applied it to his nose.

Soon the party was in marching order, and, filing along,

they climbed to the promenade-deck. It chanced that the captain of the Uncle Sam was at that moment at the head of the little, narrow stair, preparing to descend.

Mrs. Smart pounced upon him.

"Captain, will you just please to step this way a moment?" she abruptly asked, as she brushed past all who might impede her passage. "I don't pretend to say who may be to blame, sir," she proceeded, with compressed energy, "but this I *do* say, that it is high time somebody was made answerable for what is aboard of this boat, and a being carried on this upper deck——"

"And I think exactly so," put in Mrs. Hale, hysterically.

"Endangering the lives of *Government* passengers!" added Mr. Smithett.

"It is not often that I meddle or make," continued the sutler's wife, "but I certainly do not think——"

"Nor I neither," echoed her friend.

"Everybody owes a duty to themselves, particularly if they happen to bear a regular commission," corroborated the lieutenant.

"For my part, I don't consider it's out of the way to ask this gentleman, who, they tell me, is an engineer officer," pointing to Captain Lytle, as he, seeing the direction the party was taking, also approached the critical spot.

"To ask him," raising her voice, "what right he has, when one of his men happens to die, to have him boxed up and brought along with him, a breeding a contagion and an epidemic, and, maybe, being the death of us all!"

The other passengers sprang to their feet, and, with manifest excitement, pressed nearer. Mrs. Hale applied one nostril to the camphor-bottle, and held the other close with her forefinger; the lieutenant snuffed vigorously at his vinaigrette.

"What the h—l does all this mean?" growled the cap-

tain with an oath at least as deep as the centre of the earth.

"If you want to know, sir," said Mrs. Smart, elevating her voice to match the one which addressed her, "just ask the gentleman there to please to turn up that black oil-cloth, and show the passengers, if he dares, what they are all a travelling with."

Captain Lytle obligingly stepped forward and threw back the canvas cover, disclosing a low, wooden box, of oblong form, the side of which was labelled in conspicuous letters.

"There!" cried Mrs. Smart, half ruefully, half triumphantly, "you can read the initials of the poor fellow's name—U. S. It seems they did not think it worth while to paint the whole name, though they have mentioned that it was an engineer's corpse. What have you got to say now, I ask, Captain Blunt?"

Mrs. Hale had been silently handing round her bottle of camphor, which significant warning had kept most of the company at a respectful distance from the object in question. Nevertheless, some began to titter in expectation of what was coming; and when Captain Lytle, with the utmost gravity, drew a key from his pocket, and, applying it to the lock, raised the lid of the box and displayed to the astonished Mrs. Smart a collection of mathematical and surveying instruments neatly packed, the laugh became uproarious.

"Well, now, I am beat!" said the little woman. "Nothing but that? Why, who would have thought that the imagination could have smelt so, for all the world like bilge-water? But, anyhow, it was all this officer's fault! He had no business to have gone and marked his box *engineer's corpse*, just to frighten folks. 'U. S.—Engineer Corpse,'" she read aloud, with an emphasis she meant to

be convincing. Then, turning to Mr. Smithett, she said, consolingly, "Well, never mind. Don't look so pale and so cut up about it; it's well it's nothing worse."

"Who's cut up, I'd like to know?" said that young gentleman, angrily turning his back upon her. "I believe," he added, addressing Stafford, who was striving to compose his countenance, "that it is the safest way never to undertake to sympathize with those sort of people—they've no sort of gratitude, and they generally end by making themselves very disagreeable and ridiculous."

"Mais quoi!" exclaimed Monsieur Tremblay, puckering his eyebrows and thrusting out his under lip in perplexity. "What for dey mark him United States corps, ven dere no corps at all; noting but little fid-fad machine and quelqu'chose. Nobody dead and spile. C'est fort drôle ça!"

CHAPTER VI.

It was hardly mid-day when the beautiful island of Mackinac greeted the view of the travellers.

Exclamations of delight and admiration from those who beheld it for the first time were as enthusiastic as even Mr. Ewing could desire. That young gentleman had been giving Miss Latimer some sketches of the history and traditions of the island, and of his own experience during a sojourn of some years upon it—of the long winters, when letters from the outside world came, by express, only twice during the whole season—of a sleigh-ride on the ice in the harbor in the last week of May—of gathering ice on the shores on the first of June! Now, after pointing out

to her the site of the old Fort Michillimackinac, the taking of which by the Indians in the "Pontiac War" furnished so thrilling an incident in the early annals of the country, he was calling her attention to the resemblance between the outline of the island and the form of a huge green turtle reposing upon the waters.

Mr. Tremblay and Miss McGregor were meanwhile standing side by side, looking with intense earnestness towards the harbor which they were approaching.

"Now we must keep sharp look-out, if we can see de boat," said the former. "Dey mus' be come. Dey leave Lachine tree week, four week—no? Attendez! We come from Montreal—no, we come from Quebec—yes, den we come past La Marriale,* and den come up to de Boston. Dat's it—den we come to Buffalo—no, to de Fall, and we make stay two, tree day; and we stay some more day in Buffalo, and one week to Detroit wid dat respectable Monsieur Legrave; so dat make, let me see—so many days." He counted on his fingers until he grew quite puzzled.

"Yes, monsieur, we have been more than three weeks," said Madeleine, coming to his aid.

"Yes, and de boat—dey have departed before we come to Lachine," said Monsieur Tremblay.

"I had hoped they would have been here by this time; and yet I see nothing of them," said Miss McGregor. "Mr. Ewing, will you be so obliging as to lend me your spyglass for a minute?" She swept the bay and coast in search of the objects of her solicitude. "They assuredly are not here. How disappointing! how perplexing! Mr. Patterson, if he could not have accompanied them, should at least have made sure that they were under the charge

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* Montreal.

of a bourgeois* who understood the importance of promptness and dispatch. Now I suppose we will be detained here at Mackinac until they arrive." There was vexation in the tone of the young lady as she uttered these words.

"The delay will give us a little longer time to visit dear Mrs. Malcolm," said Madeleine, cheerfully. "And going to the Bay in an open boat may be, upon the whole, more pleasant than being cooped up in the cabin of the Uncle Sam. I wonder if Mrs. Lovel and Miss Latimer would not like to take passage with us in the Mackinac boat, by way of change?"

"What an absurd idea!" said her sister. "We will, at any rate, not plan till we know how matters are."

The little steamer drew up beside the "public wharf," which certainly did not rival the docks of Liverpool in the elegance and solidity of its architecture. Soon all were in the bustle and confusion of debarkation.

"I must leave you, dear, for we are going to the house of a friend," whispered Madeleine to Grace. "Possibly we may not come back to the steamer again. Papa's boats from Montreal seem not yet to have arrived; they were coming by a different route from the one we have taken—up the Ottawa River, you know. If we had met them here, and Monsieur Tremblay, or perhaps I should say Monica" (she smiled as she corrected herself), "could have seen that they were all right, we might have gone on with you to the Bay. At any rate, we shall meet there, and enjoy a little more of each other's society."

With kisses and tender pressures of the hand, the friends were about to part. "You will go, I suppose, to McKim's, for the time the boat remains," said Madeleine. "I wish I could ask you to accompany us, but Monica would not,

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* The superintendent of a party of clerks or voyageurs—*the boss.*

perhaps, approve of my taking such a liberty with Mrs. Malcolm. Of myself, I would as soon do it as not."

She hurried away in obedience to her sister's call, and accepted the escort of M. Tremblay, who was waiting for her, while Miss McGregor suffered herself to be piloted by Captain Lytle along the narrow, rickety dock, and thence to the Company's buildings, conspicuous among which stood the dwelling of Mr. Malcolm.

The elegant and gracious lady who received the party, folding Madeleine in her arms and welcoming her with a tenderness almost maternal, was an old friend of Mr. McGregor's. She had never before seen his eldest daughter, and she now looked upon her with admiring interest.

"I have greatly wished to meet you," she said, "for your father's and sister's sake. This dear child quite wound herself into our hearts when she was with us three years ago, and it was a particular satisfaction to me to know that I was to see you both at this time. Did you not meet Mr. Malcolm at the dock? He went to the boat to receive you."

"To receive us!" repeated Miss McGregor, with a look of surprise. "How did he divine that we would be on board?"

"The boats brought the news of your being on the way."

"The Company's boats? Is it possible? Have they been already here?"

"Yes, they arrived yesterday, took in their additional loading, and, without waiting for a holiday, were off in the evening."

"Then Mr. Patterson must have got the better of his rheumatism, and come along as bourgeois!"

"No; the boats were under the charge of a clerk—quite a young man, but enterprising, and entirely *au fait* of his business, as you can see by the short time he has taken to

make the trip—only a little more than three weeks, he told me, instead of the six or eight that are usually consumed. And yet his engagés do not appear to grumble. They laughed and sang at their work, and seemed as anxious as the bourgeois himself to be off at the earliest moment."

"Is it a clerk who has been up in the country before? What is his name?"

"His name is Logan. I strolled down to the beach yesterday afternoon to watch operations, for want of something more amusing, and, observing the peculiarly skilful and masterly manner in which matters were being conducted, I made the same inquiry that you have done; but the young man told me he had never before crossed Lake Huron."

"What sort of a person is he?" Miss McGregor asked.

"Very much the gentleman, and evidently a thorough, business-like person. Mr. Malcolm was entirely satisfied with Mr. Patterson's choice of a bourgeois."

The conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Malcolm, accompanied by Mr. Ewing.

"Ah, my friend Frank," said Mrs. Malcolm, her countenance beaming with satisfaction. "So you are in the Governor's train, and on your way to the Treaty they are to hold. May the chiefs hold resolutely to their rights till they get good terms, this time!"

Mr. Malcolm was welcoming and making inquiries of the young ladies.

"Logan, the young man who came up as bourgeois, told me you would be here about this time," he said. "You saw him at Lachine?"

"No; they had just left when we arrived. I am glad to hear that, though inexperienced in regard to this end of the route, he yet understands the charge of the boats and the men. Has he a good set of clerks, apparently?"

"Very respectable. We have robbed him of a couple; but he has old Michaud with him, who is a host in himself. And so, monsieur," to M. Tremblay, "you have, after so many years, been again to visit *La Marriale?*"

"Yes, I do go veesit my respectable mother, who do still leeve; and I bring Miss Monique from St. Louizon to Quebec, and den I shall escort she and Miss Madeleine wid care back to her papa." The good gentleman made this explanation with an important air

"Quebec has done wonders for Miss Madeleine," said Mr. Malcolm, with an approving glance. "How she has grown!"

"And yet she is but little changed, the dear child!" was Mrs. Malcolm's comment.

"Your father left you under the especial care of our old friend Lindsay, I remember he told me," pursued Mr. Malcolm. "How is he? And how does the world go with him? He is rich, I know; is he happy as well?"

"Not very happy, I fear," added Mrs. Malcolm. "We heard of the death of Mrs. Lindsay about a year ago. She was a noble woman! What a loss!"

"Poor Lindsay! And how does he bear such a stroke?" asked Mr. Malcolm. "Is he cheerful?"

"He is not cheerful," said Miss McGregor, to whom the question was addressed. "It is hardly to be expected that he should be. Mr. Lindsay has other troubles, as you are probably aware, besides the loss of his wife. His son——"

"Not Malcolm, my namesake! What of him?"

"Then you have not heard that he left his father's house some months ago, and has never returned? Some say that he has never been heard of; but that cannot be, for his sister, who dotes on him, is perfectly serene and cheerful."

"Left his father's house! Oh, sad! sad! But why? What was the cause?"

"There was a difficulty, I am told, between father and son."

"How shocking! And how strange that I should not have heard of it! I have not seen Malcolm since he was quite a child, he happening to have been of late years away at school and college, and more recently, when I was in Quebec, he was on a visit to his sister, in England—but he seemed, in those early years, affectionate and dutiful. How can he so have changed?"

"He has not changed," said Madeleine, in a decided tone, and for the first time looking around. "Clara did not think him at all to blame."

"Young people naturally take each other's part," observed Mr. Malcolm. "Can his family form no conjecture where he is gone?"

"I think the general impression is that he went to England, to his sister, Lady Crayfield," said Miss McGregor.

"Ah, yes—Louisa—she married a young officer who afterwards came to a title. I recollect. But if he were there, Lady Crayfield would have written to relieve his father and sister from their anxiety."

"That depends," said Miss McGregor, with a slight shrug. "Others believe that he has gone to sea. He is said to have been fond of travelling—to have talked of visiting the Holy Land, Egypt, and so forth."

"But for that he would need funds," said Mr. Malcolm.

"His dear mother left him something handsome," said Madeleine.

"After all," said Mrs. Malcolm, consolingly, "I dare say it will be only for a time. He will see his folly and come back again, I'll engage. People do take strange freaks sometimes, but the young generally get over their freaks more easily than those who are older."

M. Tremblay had his item of information to give.

"My friend, St. Martin, he do tell me he tink de young man did go to New York or Boston, for to go be partners wid Mr. Jacob Astor, because he always like de State better as de king's government."

"Oh, he will come back, and his father will forgive him, and all will be peace again, depend upon it. We will indulge no gloomy forebodings. And now, my dears, come with me. It is high time you should take off your bonnets and refresh yourselves. Frank, will you have the goodness to show M. Tremblay to his room—the same he occupied years ago when he was here? Nothing changes with us, you see, monsieur."

"Pardonnez-moi, but I see some ting dat do change," said M. Tremblay, looking admiringly up and down the long apartment. "Dis parlor change, par exemple! When I here before, dere one what you call partition dere—now you take her away, make all de room into two—so nice and snuggle! Better as one room here and one noder room dere—now it all into two!"

And M. Tremblay, with a courtly wave of the hand, followed young Ewing from the apartment.

CHAPTER VII.

With their customary hospitality, Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm were soon planning an evening reunion of the newly-arrived visitors and such neighbors, civil and military, as their limited circle could boast.

Having seen all things in train for the evening's entertainment, the mistress was at liberty to accompany her

young friends to call upon the strangers, and proffer her invitations.

Mr. Ewing was profuse in his offers of service.

"I have learned better than to salt your ice-cream," he said, "or to pick off all the raisins from your fine, large bunches, as you may remember my doing when you placed the dessert in my charge, the day you were expecting the British officers from Drummond's Island to dine with you."

The young gentleman's obliging offer was declined, and the party set off for McKim's, Mrs. Malcolm and Ewing entertaining the sisters with many an amusing reminiscence of the expedients and the perplexities of hospitality in a by-gone time.

Arrived at the small, low log building which did duty as a hotel, they found the little parlor filled to overflowing. The entire settlement seemed to have turned out—husbands to learn the news—their wives and daughters to see the fashions—children to pick up food for amusement, and make themselves disagreeable generally.

The younger travellers were voluble upon some topic of interest.

"We have a scheme on foot for an excursion to the Arched Rock," said Captain Lytle, approaching Miss McGregor.

"The excursion will have to be *on foot* as well as the scheme," said Ewing, laughing, "for, if I recollect right, there is, with the exception of the carts belonging to the Company, but one vehicle on the island—M. Dubois's old rattling calèche."

"Oh, we don't care for vehicles! exclaimed two or three of the most enterprising. "We had rather walk. It is but two miles—hardly that."

"And the weather is delightfully cool this afternoon," said another.

"And if the young ladies get tired," suggested a gallant officer, "we can bring them home *lady-chair*, as the children call it. I think we outnumber them two to one."

"Or 'poose-back, like the squaws," put in a young frontier scion, who had evidently had the range of the barracks, and whom his mother, for once, was endeavoring to jerk and twitch into propriety.

Mrs. Malcolm's invitation having been accepted, it was voted to set off on their walk at once, that the young people might be back in time to rest and refresh themselves for the evening party.

"'Seems to me you look rather pensive," whispered Miss Latimer to her friend as she passed her on her way to her apartment.

"Do I?" said Madeleine, brightening up; "I did not mean to."

"And if you did, dear child, you need not look so startled about it. I am not going to scold you."

"It's nothing," said Madeleine; "it will go off in a minute or two."

"And so shall we," said Grace, gaily, for she was in the happiest of humors. "You see I must have my poor little pun as well as the young gentlemen. Come, cheer up, there's a darling—and Mr. Ewing shall walk with you, and tell you stories about the Indians."

"Indians! I have no wish to hear about them. I sometimes wish I could never hear the name again!"

She was not aware, until she caught the look her sister threw at her, that she had spoken so as to be overheard. Miss Latimer also observed the glance—it was one that she felt she should not soon forget.

Miss McGregor had consummate powers of self-control. She was able, the next instant, to be replying graciously, and even more gaily than was her wont, to Captain Lytle

and a friend whom he had found doing penance in his second summer at this remote post.

Lieutenant Stafford was in high luck, for he had the opportunity granted him, in some unaccountable way, of attending upon the younger sister without the watchful interposition of the elder. He would have been mortified could he have fathomed Miss McGregor's mental remark,—

"Madeleine has a panoply that will keep her safe, let her be besieged as she may. She is in love with young Lindsay—of that there is not a doubt. Well, my father will be pleased; I have heard him express a wish that they might become attached and marry. I remember once, when she was a little girl, his telling her that he had promised her to Malcolm."

Miss Latimer could hardly credit the evidence of her senses when, as M. Tremblay was placing himself by Madeleine's side with a gallant bow, she heard the words of Miss McGregor, in French,—

"No occasion, monsieur; my sister is a sufficient safeguard to herself. We need not trespass on your kindness this afternoon."

Whereupon the good gentleman, after pondering a moment to make sure that he understood, delightedly withdrew, to smoke his afternoon's pipe and lose his three-and-twentieth game of euchre to Captain Lovel.

The route of the pedestrians lay for a little distance along the broad, gravelly beach, upon which were scattered two or three wigwams of Chippewa Indians—small, dirty, and uninviting. The odors of smoke and fish which met their senses, the yelping of two or three ugly curs at the approach of strangers, and finally the outpouring of the younger members of the families in a toilet that would have presented no obstacle to an immediate plunge into the waters of the lake, had such been their pleasure, all

concurred to overcome the wish for a nearer view, which Miss Latimer, among others, had at first expressed.

Miss McGregor, with a look of annoyance she could not repress, turned away from the scene, and commented with animation to Captain Lytle and his friend Captain Dalton upon the steepness of the ascent to the fort, its commanding situation—anything, in short, which would show her attention fixed in an opposite direction from the lodges.

Suddenly an Indian, not too sober, who had been lounging in the shade of the nearest lodge and staring at the party, sprang to his feet, and, rushing forward, thrust his face in close proximity to that of Miss McGregor, uttering an affectionate, delighted exclamation of,—

"Hoh! Bon-jour, bon-jour!" at the same time seizing her hand to give emphasis to the salutation.

There was a varying expression on the countenance of the young lady as she returned his "Bon-jour!" yet she added, calmly, as if for the benefit of her companions, rather than of the person addressed,—

"But you do not speak to my sister;" and with a motion she indicated Madeleine, who was close at hand.

The Chippewa must have been a habitual hanger-on of the white settlements, as his immediate comprehension of her words testified. His reply was a derisive laugh, and the emphatic exclamation, as he looked fixedly at the young girl,—

"Shee-man? *Ke-ken-don!* Chee-mo-ko-mon."*

"What is that he says?" asked Miss Latimer of her companion.

Mr. Ewing, in a low tone, interpreted the words of the Indian.

"Of course Madeleine is an American," she said. "But

* Your sister? Not by any means. She is an American.

why does he say she is not Miss McGregor's sister? Does he know them?"

"Probably he never saw them before," was the reply.

Miss Latimer's inward comment was,—

"All this looks very mysterious. I shall begin to believe that I have, indeed, got into the land of romance!"

She, however, made no further remark or inquiry, as, aided by the support of Mr. Ewing's arm, she climbed the steep, white, gravelly road which led up past the fort, and then away, by a blind and tangled path, towards their point of destination.

A young married lady from the fort had undertaken to chaperone the party, albeit such a formality was more frequently dispensed with than insisted on, in the free-and-easy conventionalities of the West. The lady in question had brought with her a lively, talkative little miss, her visitor, the daughter of an officer now at Green Bay. Miss Bond was but about thirteen or fourteen years of age, and, as there were not many to dispute the prize with him, she fell to the share of Lieutenant Smithett for the occasion. Finding that he had her society all to himself, he soon put the circumstance to profit.

The little miss, bent upon being agreeable, seeing that a beau was allotted exclusively to her, opened with,—

"Did you have a pleasant trip up the Lakes?" To which the young gentleman replied,—

"Well, no—I can't say that I had. To tell the truth, the officers who were of the party didn't take any pains to make it agreeable. They seem to think a great deal of themselves and very little of other people. One can't get along very comfortably, you know, where that's the case."

"Oh, my gracious, no! I suppose it was just like my mamma and Mrs. Bennett, in the garrison. One thinks she must have this, and the other thinks she has a right

to have that, and then if they can't have just the same, one gets mad and gives it to the quartermaster, and maybe gives a party, and invites all the garrison except him and this other lady. And so they keep on till the inspector-general comes, or some other great gun that has to be invited all round, and then they make it up because they want to borrow each other's things. There's queer doings in garrison, sometimes, you know."

"No, I can't say I do know; for, to tell the truth, I've never lived in a garrison. You, of course, who have lived in one, must know all about it."

"Oh, yes, I've been brought up in one all my life."

"Well, then, as you have had so much experience, I should like to ask your advice upon one or two points."

The young lady held up her head at this, and looked as tall and as wise as possible.

"Now, for instance," pursued the lieutenant, "suppose I had just arrived at my post—what is the first thing I would have to do?"

"That depends upon where you came from. If you came from the Sault, or down the Fox River with a parcel of Indians for guides, I guess the first thing you had better do would be to use your fine-tooth comb," said the young lady, with admirable frankness. "But, wherever you happen to come from, you had better fix yourself and spruce up a little—it's the way they all do."

"Oh, that of course. I always attend to my toilet the first thing. But if I came there a stranger, I should want some place to go to. Is there any such thing as a hotel in the fort?"

"A hotel in a garrison? What a funny idea!" cried Miss Bond, laughing merrily.

"What in the world am I to do, then?" asked the young man, with a blank look. "Where am I to go?"

"Why, you are to go to the quartermaster, to be sure, and ask him to assign you quarters, and if he has a room, he will give you one."

"And if he has not?"

"Then he will put you in half a one, along with somebody else; maybe with some old bachelor that's got the asthma; somebody that nobody else cares to room with. But what are you? a first, or a second, or only a brevet?"

"I am a second lieutenant now, but I expect to be a first very soon."

"Oh, well, if that's all, you can't turn anybody else out and take their quarters—you will have to put up with just what you can get. And you won't find the quartermaster any too accommodating. Mamma says it's the nature of a quartermaster to be contrary and disobliging—that's what they are made for."

"Are the quarters furnished? Shall I be likely to be comfortably fixed?"

"There will be a pine table that the soldiers have made, and maybe a stool or two, and perhaps the *sub* who occupied it before you, may have left his bowl and pitcher—they don't generally take them with them when they move away. But you must not be surprised to find them cracked and the handle gone. The quartermaster will make you pay full price for them, though," said the mischievous little thing, who was not wanting in cleverness, and could read her companion thoroughly.

"Dear me! This is certainly not an agreeable prospect," said Mr. Smithett, wiping from his brow with his perfumed pocket-handkerchief the drops that exercise and vexation had called forth. "I must say that I had no idea that entering the army involved such sacrifices. If, in addition to this, one should happen to lose a leg or an arm, or per-

haps be killed! I really think it is asking too much of one!"

"Oh, if you lose a leg or an arm, you will get a pension, you know."

"A pension—how much?"

"Oh, a good deal—enough to buy all your tobacco. I know an old lame captain who gets all that he chews, and as many as eight or ten pipes a month besides, with his pension-money."

"I never chew nor smoke pipes myself," said the young man; and for a considerable time he walked on in sulky silence.

It was well the party had an experienced person like Mr. Ewing for their guide, the Arched Rock being a spot not easy to find, as many an unsuccessful explorer of that day could testify. They came upon it at last, however, and a simultaneous exclamation of wonder and delight burst from the company as it met their view.

A vast chasm, formed by some convulsion of nature, opened from the summit of an elevated cliff, quite down to the waters below—its outer verge spanned by a natural bridge, from the joints and crevices of which grew tufts of evergreens and other shrubbery, giving it the appearance of a triumphal arch. From the sides of the hollow cleft or tunnel, trees, tall and spreading, reared themselves, yet not in such profusion as to shut out a lovely view of the lake lying far below, calm, clear, and beautiful, as if it were a picture thus wondrously framed. As the beholders gazed, a birch canoe, light and graceful, paddled by a couple of natives, shot like a bird across the bright, sparkling opening, and was quickly lost to view.

"Oh, how beautiful! how grand! how wonderful! Has it been here ever since the deluge, do you think?" asked one.

"A good while, at any rate, to judge from the size of the trees growing far down within the gorge," observed another.

"Could it have been made by an earthquake?" "Do they have earthquakes here?" "What do the Indians say about it?" Such were some of the questions addressed to Ewing, as the person whose experience best entitled his opinion to consideration. Ewing, however, could only tell them he had never heard any tradition as to its origin.

"Could any one walk across it?" asked an adventurous young lady.

"I have done such a foolhardy act myself, in my boyhood," said the young secretary; "but I fancy no one would venture to attempt it now, for the stones are beginning to crumble. If you look below, you will see here and there a mass that has evidently dropped from the arch."

"I suppose there are some interesting histories and legends attached to the wonderful feat of Nature, if we may so characterize it," remarked the Commissioner.

Mr. Ewing seemed not to have anything of the kind ready at his service.

"It is the business of a traveller to *invent* wonderful legends," said Miss Latimer. "Suppose we each exercise our talents in that way, to beguile the remaining hours of our trip, and then compare notes. If anybody likes my production, I will give him leave to put it in his journal for veritable history."

The Commissioner did not look quite pleased: he was not sure whether Miss Latimer meant to be satirical, or only gay and amusing.

The scattered groups soon found shady spots where they could rest and luxuriate in the contemplation of the magnificent panorama spread out before them of lake, and headland, and distant islet. The refreshing breeze that

began to rise over the cliff, brought the balsamic fragrance of the spruce and fir, and the gentle fragrance of the scattered wild-flowers, to add yet another charm to their enjoyment.

Music was pronounced the only element wanting to fill the measure of actual beatitude, and the ladies were not inexorable to the petitions of their cavaliers. Many sweet songs were sung. The Miss McGregors delighted the company with a spirited little French duet, the words of which Mr. Ewing promised to write down for Miss Latimer.

"I wonder," whispered the Commissioner to the young secretary, "if they would sing us something in Indian? I should like amazingly to get the words of an aboriginal song; but the elder sister took me up in such a fiery manner the other day, that I don't quite like to ask a favor of her." And he glanced hesitatingly at the young lady, through his gold spectacles.

"There is very little melody in the Indian music," said Mr. Ewing. "At the Bay you will doubtless have abundant opportunities of hearing and judging for yourself. Miss McGregor, I am convinced, would prefer not to sing one of the songs of her people at present."

Mr. Smithett, for his part, did not think much of the music. "It was not to be expected," as he remarked in a whisper to Miss Bond, "that it should make much impression on a person who had heard Phillips and Mrs. French, and who had attended the Opera at the Park Theatre and the Philharmonics, and whose sister, moreover, had taken lessons of Taylor at twenty-five dollars a quarter!"

CHAPTER VIII.

In the course of the evening Mr. Malcolm learned a few further particulars of the domestic troubles of his friend Lindsay. Among the passengers who had come in the Uncle Sam he found an old acquaintance from Quebec, a M. Rivard, who, as it proved, was a neighbor, living on rather intimate terms with the Lindsay family.

This gentleman was not long in furnishing a supplement to the account given by Miss McGregor and M. Tremblay.

"Our good friend, as you are perhaps aware," said M. Rivard, "has grown a little ambitious as riches and prosperity have increased."

"It is several years," replied Mr. Malcolm, "since I visited Quebec, and still longer since Lindsay was at the West. When I last saw him I detected a slight change from the manners of his earlier life—something of the *grand seigneur*, if I may so call it."

"Yes, and his ambition has been especially for his children. Having married his eldest daughter in England to a man of high connection, and who by the lapse of several lives has come to a title, he, perhaps not unnaturally, formed great expectations for the other two. I think it was about two years ago that our new Governor-General came out, and with him came, as his aide, an officer of rank, the father of three or four pretty and accomplished daughters. Lindsay, as might be expected, promoted an intimacy between his young people and Colonel Damer's family, and the result of their being thus thrown together seems to have been, that one of the young ladies fell violently in love with your namesake, Malcolm—as fine a young fellow

as you will meet with. The young lady certainly had every excuse, as far as that goes."

"And was the penchant mutual?"

"His father assumed that it was, and did not conceal his satisfaction at the prospect of the niatch. It is generally understood that the matter was talked of between the parents. Judge, then, of our friend's chagrin and disappointment when his son declared himself utterly and unchangeably averse to a marriage with Miss Damer—asserted that he had never paid attention to one sister more than to the others—never had the slightest preference for either—admired them all, but neither could nor would think of one of them for a wife. Lindsay was in a taking, you may be sure, for he does not understand being opposed in what he sets his heart on."

"And what did the poor mother say?"

"She was very much out of health at the time, and I fancy they kept the matter from her as much as possible. At length she died, and, as nearly as I can learn, the young man was left for some months undisturbed. Then came a new impulse to the affair. The Governor, it is said, congratulated our friend one day, and expressed his contentment with the news, which, it seems, Colonel Damer, in the fulness of his heart, had imparted to him. As a token of his interest in the matter, he offered young Lindsay a very eligible Government appointment by way of enabling him to set out in his married life in a style to suit both fathers. The young lady being some two or three years older than her chosen, there was no danger of delay on *her* part."

"All that is too much in the old-country style of doing business to suit my views," said Mr. Malcolm; "but go on."

"Things happen in the bosoms of families which are supposed to be profound secrets, yet which do, somehow, leak out," said M. Rivard.

"It was so with the Lindsays. Servants told of high words in the library—the father charging the son with disobedience and want of duty, threatening to disinherit him, finally ordering him to leave the house; the son maintaining his right to choose for himself, complaining of injustice and tyranny, and ending by taking his father at his word. He left, nobody, it is said, unless it might be his sister, knowing whither he went."

"And they have never heard from him?"

"Friends of the family think his sister must receive letters. Attached as they were to each other, she could not be cheerful if she were in suspense about him."

"M. Tremblay tells me that some suspect him of having gone to New York or Boston and entered into business, under an assumed name, of course."

"I am much more inclined to think he proceeded to St. Louis," said M. Rivard, "and has gone far away into the Indian country, with an expedition of hunters and trappers. It would just suit his humor. He is very athletic, spirited, and fond of adventure. He will stay away awhile, and then his father will come to his senses and send for him home again. That will be the way of it."

Miss McGregor was more than usually brilliant and beautiful this evening. There was a feeling of triumph as she detected in the manner of Captain Lytle a shade of disquietude when his friend Dalton hung round her and showed an obvious solicitude to please her. They were United States officers; if both were jealous and uncomfortable, so much the better. She loved the Big Knives no better than did the most of her mother's people.

That he was beginning to be jealous Captain Lytle was himself conscious. He did what few men do—he reasoned upon the matter.

"It is perhaps time to ask myself what I intend to do,"

he said. "Dalton is putting in pretty strong. It was not for that, by-the-by, that I took such pains to show her to him. It is rather an unfriendly trick—only, perhaps, he did not suspect I had any claims. And have I? Ah, that's the question! I certainly do think her splendid—oh, most charming!" Here he glanced past the two or three intervening guests, and encountered those brilliant eyes, which were instantly directed another way. "I think she likes me—that if I make up my mind to be in earnest, I can win her without too much difficulty; and she is a woman whom any man might be proud to win. But then—but then—after all, what is the violent hurry about deciding the question? I have known her little more than a week, and there is no reason why I should be precipitate. However, as Dalton seems rather disposed to trifle with her, I had better go and put a stop to his nonsense."

Which the gallant captain did, monopolizing Miss McGregor so completely that his friend was compelled to leave the field and seek entertainment elsewhere.

The little steamer was not ready by the time breakfast was over next morning, as Captain Blunt had notified his passengers she would be. There would be plenty of time, Mr. Malcolm assured his young guests, for a visit to the Mission House before they would be summoned on board. The young ladies accordingly put on their hats and joined Mrs. Malcolm, who looked much pleased at seeing Miss McGregor of the party.

"I am glad you are going with us, my dear," she said. "It is gratifying when those of your church manifest an interest in our Protestant efforts in behalf of the Indian and half-breed children."

"I do not propose going to the school," said Miss McGregor, gently. "I shall call for a short visit on old

Madame Dubois, my mother's relative, and I will join you on your return."

They walked along, accompanied by Ewing, who was an old acquaintance of the ladies at the Mission. He was in advance, with the elder sister; and as the two were soon engaged in an animated conversation, Mrs. Malcolm, lingering a little in the rear with the younger, remarked,—

"Your sister does not relax, I perceive, on any occasion, from the strictness of her religious exclusiveness. How do you and she get on together in that regard?"

"Only by making it a point never to discuss the subject," said Madeleine, with a sigh. "The difference in our belief seems to be gradually widening the breach which, for some reason I cannot understand, separates us. Oh, if Monica would only love me! I have always loved and admired her so much! Except in two particulars, I try to accommodate my views and opinions to hers. Having been trained by my father in his own religious faith, and having become still more confirmed in it during my stay in Quebec, I cannot harmonize with her upon points which she deems essential to salvation; neither can I take the same exalted views she does of the race from which we spring. I pity the Indians with all my heart, but I am not proud of them. I look upon them as they are—Monica only sees them in the past, when they were, as she never forgets, the sovereigns of all this beautiful land; and she glories, or at least she professes to glory, in her affinity with them, and in her descent from a race of princes and heroes."

"Is that feeling still so strong with her? I should have supposed that intercourse with the world to which her father belongs would have modified it in some degree, as well as softened somewhat her unkindly feelings towards the Americans."

"She has not been in the right world for that," said Madeleine. "Our father, being a native Scotsman, is only the more reprehensible with her from having become an American by naturalization. Then the people, you remember, by whom we are surrounded, are almost all of foreign birth, or else of aboriginal connections. Oh! Monica loves the British. She regards them as the unvarying, beneficent friends of the native tribes. I think her present visit, so far from softening, has added strength to her inveterate feeling against our Government. In Canada she has been accustomed to hear these questions discussed, and a contrast drawn between the policy of the British Government and that of the United States towards the Indians—and I suppose," said Madeleine, with a sigh, "our American people do not shine in the comparison."

"Perhaps her mother—I beg pardon—your mother fostered this feeling—this love of her people."

"Not in me. I do not recollect that she ever taught me to set a value on my Indian blood. Perhaps she saw that I was not as hopeful a pupil as Monica, for the feeling of distaste in me was just as strong from my childhood as it is now. Certain it is, that to my sister and not to me were directed all her instructions as to the dignity and grandeur of their race. *She* was the depositary of all the traditions of their early greatness; and it was she, and not I, who was taught to feel that the blood of the whites was ennobled in mingling with that of the native chiefs."

"Your mother was a Christian, if I remember right?" said Mrs. Malcolm.

"Yes, she was a devout Catholic—and, strange as it may seem, my father permitted her to bring up my sister in her own religion, while he would not allow one of their distinctive principles to be taught to me. He has never been what is generally called a religious man himself; yet

he used to take me on his knee and hear me my Catechism when I was a very little child—and if I had a Catholic picture or a little book given me by the priest, or one of the French ladies who used to come to our house, and who would sometimes take this method of teaching me quietly what I was not allowed to learn openly, papa would take it from me, and lock it up in his desk, telling me that that was not my religion."

"And did your mother never attempt to instruct you at all?"

"Very rarely. She was so conscientiously attached to her own church, and so fully convinced that out of its bosom there was no hope of salvation, that she did, now and then, give me a gentle hint in accordance with its teachings; but this would always displease my father if it came to his knowledge, and he would express himself so strongly, that at length she discontinued it altogether."

"Your mother was a Sioux, was she not?"

"No—a Winnebago, or rather a Métive*—her father was a chief of that tribe—her mother was a Spanish child, stolen in her infancy from a settlement not far distant from St. Louis. When, years afterwards, her family traced her, and would have persuaded her to return to them, she refused, and persisted in remaining as the wife of the chief, our grandfather. A niece of hers, that is, a cousin of our mother's, a very accomplished lady, was the Superior of a convent in St. Louis, and it was to her that Monica was sent for her education. My father would never consent that I should go."

"I remember your telling me on your former visit that the wife of one of the clerks had been your daily governess," said Mrs. Malcolm.

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* A half-breed. The expression applies to any degree of mixture.

"Yes—she was an excellent teacher—she had been reared to that vocation. When she died, I had to be sent to Quebec."

"Did your mother speak English?"

"A very little. To my father and me she spoke in French. She preferred it, I suppose, because it was the language of her priests and most of her Catholic friends. With Monica she always talked in Winnebago, and occasionally, when she wished to say anything to my father which I was not to understand, she would address him in Chippewa, which he understood well, though he had never learned her own language. There was another thing: my mother would go, from time to time, to visit her relatives upon the Upper Mississippi, or at the Four Lakes, and upon these occasions she always took Monica with her, while I was invariably left with my father. I never saw one of my Winnebago connections, except at our own house when they came to visit my mother."

"You say, my dear," said Mrs. Malcolm, tenderly, "that you cannot understand what it is that separates you and your sister. Now, it is quite evident to me that the manner in which you two have been reared could not do otherwise than create a division of interests between you. You were trained to have hardly a feeling in common. As things were, Monica would naturally cling to her mother, with all whose principles and predilections she was permitted to sympathize. You, on the contrary, could not but feel yourself, and be regarded by your mother, as your father's child, rather than her own. Was not that the case?"

"I think it was," said Madeleine. "It would be a foolish affectation in me to deny that I was far dearer to my father's heart than my sister was; and it used to puzzle me, when a child, why it should be so. Monica was always

very obedient and dutiful—mamma taught her to be so—it seemed to be the strongest principle she inculcated. 'Do this, because your father wishes it.' 'Don't do that, for it will displease your father.' Obedience, however, is not love; and it must have been because I was more demonstrative in my affection that my father always treated me with what might have looked like a partial tenderness."

"And were you equally demonstrative with your mother?"

"I think I was, when I was with her, for I was very fond of her, though I could always see that Monica was her favorite. I must own, however, that I always preferred being with my father. When he was not occupied with his business, he passed the most of his time in his office or library, which was in one wing of his house, and after I had finished my lessons I always went there to find him. My mother lived in the other wing, and we seldom all met together, except at our meals. At evening, when my father would have us with him in the parlor, to chat and amuse him, Monica would slip away early to my mother's part of the house. Sometimes I would go with her, but generally it was my choice to stay with papa."

"Did your mother adopt the costume of the whites along with their mode of life?"

"Not at all. She always wore a match-ee-coat-ee of blue cloth, very prettily ornamented with bright-colored ribbons. I remember crying more than once, when I was a child, because I could not have one like it. Her hair, which was very long and abundant, and had a little wave in it like Monica's, was gathered into a mass on her neck behind, and wound round and round with beads, generally purple and white. In the morning she would wear a shirt of pretty French chintz; but if there was to be company,

and she was to come into the parlor of an evening, she always put on a shirt of black or purple silk, trimmed with several rows of small silver brooches. The blanket, or, as the French say, the *couverte*, she used to wear then, was such as you have doubtless seen—fine blue broadcloth, with a dozen or more rows of narrow, bright-colored ribbons, cut into points and lapped over one another, and sewed, oh, so neatly! Mamma was an exquisite needlewoman. I used to think, when she was dressed for company, with her leggings and her little moccasins all embroidered so handsomely with porcupine-quills, that there never could be a more splendid person."

"You speak of your father and mother occupying different portions of the house—was that their ordinary manner of life?"

"From my earliest recollection it was so. I never saw my father in my mother's apartments, unless when she, or one of us, was indisposed, which was very rarely. At such times he would come and sit, and offer her little attentions or inquiries, such as a friend or a physician might have done—nothing further."

"Was there tenderness and affection in their manner towards each other?" asked Mrs. Malcolm.

"Nothing of the kind. Politeness always, for my father, you know, is a very well-bred man; but his politeness was, as it now seems to me, cold and ceremonious. Sometimes I could see an expression on mamma's face, when she looked towards him, as if the ice—for I can call it by no other name—were melting away; but if he observed it, it would never bring any evidence of a corresponding feeling on his part. There would be a great many days when he and I would not see my mother at all, for she would have moods of not coming where my father was—and when that was the case she did not appear to care for seeing me

either. Now that I have seen how other families live—particularly since I have known yours and the dear Lindsays—I look back with wonder at our strange, unnatural mode of life. What you have said, dear Mrs. Malcolm, partly explains many things that were formerly incomprehensible to me, but not all. Poor mamma!" said the young girl, wiping away the tears as she spoke, "she is gone where she will have no more sorrows! I think she must have grieved not to take leave of me, for I believe she really loved me. Her ways were very tender to me at times, though never, never as my father's were."

Miss McGregor and Mr. Ewing had been so absorbed in their dialogue, which they carried on in that peculiarly soft, musical dialect which distinguishes the Ottáwa branch of "the Three Fires"* from its kindred tongues, that they had taken no heed of the conversation of the other members of their party. Now, however, that they had arrived at the dwelling of Madame Dubois, close under the droppings of the little Catholic sanctuary, Miss McGregor bade her companions good-morning, and left them to proceed together on their visit to the Mission House.

CHAPTER IX.

Arrived at the humble abode of her relative, Miss McGregor's gentle tap was answered by the Canadian welcome,—

"Open the door!"

The French inhabitants of the frontier avoid, with superstitious caution, the customary invitation "Come in,"

* Chippewa, Ottáwa, Pottowattamie.

which they regard as foreboding evil, especially if it happen to be given at night. They say that "the demon" is prone to make his beguiling visits, and chiefly in the hours of darkness—therefore, any one who bids him enter runs the risk of his establishing his quarters so that he cannot be ousted.

"Ah! Española, or shall I rather say *Mau-nee-qua*, the traveller? At last you are come?" was the salutation which the young lady received, as, in obedience to the mandate, she raised the latch and entered.

She was met by a venerable old lady, whose dark though still handsome face and aboriginal attire bespoke her descent, if not her full native affinity.

"Oh, call me Española, that sweet, beloved name of my happiest days!" exclaimed the young lady, returning the embrace of her relative with more effusion than she was wont to exhibit. "And yet the other name may not be less appropriate, for I am, as you doubtless guess, returning from a journey—a long journey."

"Yes, I am aware that you arrived at the island yesterday morning—that you afterwards made an excursion with a gay young party to the Arched Rock. The evening, too, was spent in the society of the merry and thoughtless! Have you learned, my child, to find your happiness in pleasures like these? Is Española so changed that the ties of kindred and the claims of duty are losing their hold upon her?"

The look of the old lady was sad and reproachful.

"No, ma tante," said Miss McGregor, "Española is not changed. It was in the fulfilment of claims both of kindred and duty that the time was passed, which should otherwise have been devoted to her mother's friend."

Madame Dubois looked inquiringly.

"Those who told you of my arrival, did they not also

tell you by whom I was accompanied?" asked the young lady. "Perhaps it surprises you to learn that my sister was confided to *my* charge—that *I* was the person selected by my father to go with good, foolish M. Tremblay to Quebec, to bring his cherished one back to him! Listen—he did still more. He said, and never before had he spoken to me with so much friendly confidence, 'Monica, guard her as you would the apple of your eye. Keep her, as far as in you lies, from all bodily danger, but do not forget that there is a greater peril still. Madeleine is young and beautiful—in the years that she has been away from her home she may have become thoughtless. Her attractions will bring around her a host of admirers; it is for you to keep such at a distance. Watch over her—do not trust her out of your sight—remember how desolate would be your father's heart should his darling make an evil choice and shipwreck her happiness for life! Will you promise me to observe all this?' And I did promise—I accepted the charge, though my heart was bursting, as I heard no word of counsel for myself—no hint of solicitude lest *I* should choose unwisely—no warning that disappointment to *me* would throw a cloud over his future."

Miss McGregor paused for a moment, unable to control her emotion. Her relative drew her tenderly to her bosom.

"My child, my Española, should you not regard this omission rather as a proof of your father's confidence and respect? Would he not naturally say, 'Monica needs no caution—she has already shown that at the suggestion of duty she can tear forth the affections that are rooted in her very heart-strings'?"

"Pardon me, ma tante, if I do not yield my convictions. What is respect from a father to a child? If I do well, he *must* respect me—but why am I not entitled to a share of his affection? It has been ever so. Madeleine is the pride

and delight of his heart; I am tolerated—I am provided for—I meet with no actual unkindness, but I win no love. I am not blind, ma tante—I cannot be unaware of the position I occupy. I look in vain for one such glance as rests on that cherished one at every turn. Like my mother, my beloved, blessed mother, I am cut off—thrust out——"

The agitation of the young lady, so unlike her ordinary, quiet demeanor, quite got the mastery of her, until, after a short interval, the soothing accents of her venerable relative helped her to subdue the outburst.

"My child," she said, "offer all your sufferings and tribulations to God. They shall work for your eternal good—they shall bring you a great reward. Not one of them shall be lost. Do not lay up hard thoughts against your father. We cannot hope for love from all alike. You had a superabundant share of your mother's affection—remember that, and that your little sister had only your father to love and comfort her. Be just, Monica. Pray to God, above all things, to give you a resigned spirit. Never forget that with our people to *feel* injured is to meditate redress. Had you the French rather than the Spanish mingled with the blood of our tribe, your temptations and sufferings would be less. Remember that you are descended from a susceptible and passionate stock—still, if you earnestly strive, you may, like your exemplary mother, learn self-conquest. Keep your religious duties uppermost in your mind, my dear child. Fasting and vigils will help you more in your path to heaven than the society of the gay worldlings who now cluster around you. Is it not so, my Española?"

The young lady remained for a few minutes with downcast eyes, as if questioning or holding an argument with herself. Madame Dubois held her clasped, occasionally

resting her disengaged hand upon the shoulder of her cousin's child. Monica could not escape her searching glance.

"You think I am jealous of my sister, ma tante," she said, at length, raising her eyes, "and that I may be led to act unkindly towards her. I assure you that I have fulfilled my father's injunctions to the letter. I have watched over her with the most scrupulous care. I have observed, particularly, his interdiction of the society of the young officers among whom she might be thrown, and whose attentions I know would be displeasing to him. My father shall have nothing to complain of. I have never relaxed my vigilance—never suffered my sister a moment out of my sight, except when with some esteemed female friend, like Mrs. Malcolm, for instance."

"Then, if you take her back to her father heart-free——"

"Nay, I do not say that, ma tante. How can I answer for what may have taken place before my arrival in Quebec? For all that has occurred since I was invested with the guardianship, I am ready to answer."

And, to change the current of conversation, Miss McGregor began relating to her relative all the particulars she had been able to gather of the history and welfare of the large circle of old French friends in Montreal, the birthplace of the ci-devant Monsieur Dubois.

When it was at length time for Monica to think of returning to Mrs. Malcolm's abode, her relative could not refrain from yet another admonitory lesson.

"Adieu, my Española—we shall meet no more on this side the grave. Let my counsels sink deep into your heart. Do not rebel against the allotments of God—He portions out to all as His wisdom sees best. Remember how the Blessed Virgin once appeared in a visible manifestation to that humble and patient cousin of your own blessed

mother's. When this poor Ursula—such was her baptismal name—was ready to faint and perish under the sufferings of her lot, she was vouchsafed, as we are told by the holy missionary, Father Giardini, a vision of the blessed mother of God, in a robe of heavenly blue, with a crown of gold upon her head and strings of pearls about her neck. The heavenly visitant, seeing this poor soul deserted by her cruel husband, and alone in the lodge, discoursed much to her about the recompense laid up in store for the patient and the faithful, until every pain departed from her."

With this consoling anecdote, and a protracted, tender embrace, Madame Dubois suffered her young relative to depart.

CHAPTER X.

Captain Lytle, having been very hospitably and agreeably entertained at the Fort, prepared himself, after breakfast, to descend to the steamer, or rather to the Company's buildings and Miss McGregor.

He went to the apartment of his friend Dalton, to inquire whether he would walk with him down to McKim's, or whether they should say good-by to each other then and there. There was a little affectation in this, for he was aware that his friend was officer of the day.

What, then, was his surprise, on opening the door of that gentleman's apartment, to find him hastily stuffing sundry articles of apparel into a valise, and to be accosted with a "Wish me joy, old fellow! The major has given me a ten days' leave, and I am off with you to the Bay."

Captain Lytle did his best to look delighted. "But your tour of duty?" he said.

"Oh, Burnham takes that for me—it is all arranged. I couldn't, as I told the major, be contented to see so little of you, after our long separation."

"Yes—ah! the major is a trump, to be sure. But," said the captain, as if deliberating, "I don't feel as if I ought to ask so much of the major. I was thinking whether it wouldn't, upon the whole, be better for me to remain here now, and finish up what surveys and observations I have to make in this neighborhood, before going on to the Bay."

"Very well," assented Captain Dalton, cheerfully; "you might do that. You can get through in a couple of days, I suppose; and if the schooner Mayfly is not along by that time, you can easily get a canoe with a crew who will pull you and Stafford over in no time at all. We shall still be able to have a fine old time together after you reach the Bay. I will set them all to getting up something worth while for you to enjoy after you arrive."

No idea of stopping at home to entertain him, and then enjoying the delights of his society in a pull across to the Bay after his labors were finished, seeming to occur to his friend Dalton, Captain Lytle found himself obliged to say, "Upon the whole, I think I will accompany you, and leave this part of my labors till the last."

And so the two walked affectionately down to McKim's together, and together they lounged up and down the little hall, called at Mr. Malcolm's without the pleasure of finding the ladies at home, and strolled along the beach in the hot sun, each resolved that the other should obtain no manner of advantage over himself.

It was not until the passengers were flocking to the boat, in obedience to the summons of the bell, that the two friends caught sight of their cynosure, or that Stafford had an opportunity of greeting the pretty Madeleine.

Never, he thought, had she looked so lovely. Her warm walk had given her a heightened color, though her large Leghorn hat, set, as was then the fashion, upon the top of her head and drooping over her face, shaded it from too great exposure to the rays of the sun. She had exchanged her thick travelling-dress of the day before for a simple checked silk, which, fitting closely to her form, showed its slender and graceful proportions to advantage. A scarf of plain black silk completed her costume, the simplicity of which was in noticeable contrast with the bright yet becoming battiste and gay ribbons of her sister.

As the little boat steamed out of the harbor, and across the clear, pure, green waters of the straits, the company gathered in groups, some to gaze into the transparent depths below, and watch the fish darting about as if only a limpid atmosphere intervened—others to take an admiring survey of the ever-changing, ever-solitary landscape.

The Commissioner was, as usual, extracting information; he was at the same time casting about for an opportunity of reinstating himself in the good graces of Miss McGregor. To this end, he went into ecstasies with everything that came under his observation.

"And what did you tell me," he asked of the captain of the Uncle Sam, "is the name of that beautiful headland, or island, in the distance?"

"No great beauty in the island, or its name either," growled the captain. "It's called Skillagalee."

"Skillagalee!" repeated the Commissioner. "I wonder what that means?"

"Don't know, I'm sure," said the captain. "Guess Frank Ewing can tell you."

But the Commissioner preferred applying to Miss McGregor.

"Pray, my dear young lady, might I trouble you so

far?" he pleaded, in an insinuating tone. "Would you be so very kind as to inform me to which Indian dialect this name belongs, and what is its meaning?"

"It belongs to no language that I am acquainted with," said Miss McGregor.

"Really, that is very strange—Skillagalee!—it sounds as if it might mean something. Ah! here comes Mr. Ewing, my sheet-anchor—eh, Captain Blunt? My right bower, Captain Lovel—eh? Now, Mr. Ewing, the question is, the name of that island—Skillagalee! what language is it? To what tribe does it belong?"

"The name is French," said Ewing, with mischievous gravity.

"Skeel-ah-gah—I can't make it out," said the perplexed Commissioner, screwing his face, and pronouncing the syllables slowly.

"Nor I either," whispered Madeleine to her friend.

"Ce qu'il a—I not make him out what he got, neider," said M. Tremblay.

"It is simply the sailor's corruption of *Ile à galet*," explained Ewing,—"a name given it by the voyageurs, from the abundance of small, flat stones, like paving-stones, with which the shores of the island are covered."

"Ile à galet! Dey better call him ile à galette," said M. Tremblay; "it look ver' mooch like one pancake in his shape!"

"Excellent! excellent! quite an interesting little item of philology," said the Commissioner. "I do not remember to have seen anything of this kind in print." And he went on jotting down in his memorandum-book the information he had received.

"Do travellers often take such liberties with the President's French, out here?" asked Miss Latimer.

"Sailors and emigrants do pretty much as they like,"

said Mr. Ewing. "For instance, a place in the interior, which, being a marsh, was originally called 'la Mauvaise Terre,' has now become 'Moving Star.' And another little settlement, on an elevated piece of ground, named by the first explorers 'Terre haute,' is now 'Tarry haughty.'"

"The settlers take liberties with our friends the *nee-chees** too, sometimes," said Captain Blunt. "Down in the St. Joseph country they have got in the way of calling old To-pee-nee-bee's village Tuppenny Bay—I suppose they think somebody will get it a cheap bargain as soon as they drive the rightful owners off."

Miss Latimer was greatly amused at these little perversions; she was, in fact, in such a gay humor that she could have laughed heartily upon still slighter provocation. Now that she had the satisfaction of seeing her favorite Madeleine enjoying a degree of placid contentment, she was all the better prepared to find satisfaction in whatever met her eye or ear.

As for Colonel Babbitt, he was in a state of beatitude: like Captain Cuttle, he "made a note" of everything new that offered, and like Oliver Twist, he "asked for more."

"De bourgeois, he alway keep along de nort' shore wid de boat, I s'pose," was the remark of M. Tremblay. "Den dey shall be at 'le Seul Choix' to-morrow morning."

"Shoo-shwaw—that means 'Hobson's choice,' they tell me," said Captain Blunt, willing to contribute his mite.

"It one ver' good choice," said M. Tremblay—"nice, pritty place. I voyage dere once, me—many long year ago—ver' nice, only de canaille de voyageur, and de bourgeois too, dey play all sort monkey trick on de poor traveller wat never been to de *Seul Choix* before. Dey hide my pantaloon—(I mus' beg pardon to de ladies)—and dey

* The Indians.

tie a long string to my hat and de noder end of him to one bush fast, so ven I get up, chut! 'way go my hat—and so many, many hugly trick dey play me."

"My dear sir, will you be so kind as to take this chair and sit right down beside me?" said the Commissioner, earnestly. "I should like to have a more detailed account of that voyage."

And almost by force he drew the reluctant Frenchman to a seat close by his side, where, for another half-hour, instead of stealing off to his favorite euchre with Captain Lovel, he was compelled to answer questions and recall particulars wellnigh forgotten, of the ceremonies by which he, as a novice, was initiated into his frontier life—*Seul Choix* being to the voyageur on the lakes what crossing the line for the first time is to the mariner upon the ocean.

Death's door proved to be, to the travellers, anything but the gate of horrors which its name betokened. It had rained, and the wind had somewhat freshened during the preceding night, but they were now among the islands, and there was not enough sea to cause an inconvenient motion to the boat.

The passengers kept their places on the deck, Miss McGregor dividing her smiles so equally between the two military friends that neither one could flatter himself with cause to triumph over the other.

The quiet flow of events was, at one time, unpleasantly varied by an accident that befell M. Rivard, the Quebec passenger, on his way to the dining-cabin. In descending the stairs, he unfortunately slipped on the polished edge of the upper steps, and, falling along the spiral turning, he strained and bruised his ankle. At first he made light of it, and went to table, eating, as was his wont, with an excellent appetite. It was, as usual, quite an amusement to the young ladies, to see the bones come pouring, as if of

their own accord, out of the corners of his mouth, as he discussed slice after slice of the rich, red lake trout.

After a time, however, the old gentleman found himself suffering acutely, and altogether too lame to mount the stairs, when the rest of the company left the table. Mr. Ewing, with prompt kindness, procured a bandage from the steward and bound up the swollen ankle with cold water—then adjusted some pillows upon the lockers, and soon had the satisfaction of observing that his ministrations had alleviated the pain, and that his patient seemed likely to fall into a comfortable sleep.

Madeleine had offered to read to him, and had gone in search of her book for the purpose, when the relief afforded by the application began to tell upon the old gentleman, and while assuring Ewing that "One can—be—philosophe—when one has—cool—repose—friend—I was going to——" his eyes and his observations came to a close simultaneously, and the two young people were left at liberty to rejoin their party.

In another hour the steamer was approaching the beautiful harbor in the larger of the Pottowattamie Islands, at which she was to stop and take in wood.

It had been, as Captain Blunt expressed it, "a spoke in his wheel," that, for some reason or other, he had not been able to procure at Mackinac a sufficient supply of fuel to serve his little craft to the end of her voyage. There was, therefore, no alternative but for him to depend upon the zeal and diligence of his crew in adding to their stock at the first convenient stopping-place.

So dense were the forests on the lovely and picturesque islands of this group, that the expanse of water forming the harbor in question did not open to the view until, in passing a sheltered headland, the Uncle Sam came full upon its entrance.

An exclamation of joy and surprise burst simultaneously from M. Tremblay and Miss McGregor.

"The boats! Is it possible?"

"De boat! Les voilà! Vive le bourgeois!"

Yes, there, drawn up on the beach and tethered to the shrubs and bushes along the margin of the water, was the little fleet, the object of so much solicitude. They surely could not have been long arrived, yet already their cargoes were carefully covered with prélarts, or large sheets of painted canvas, to protect them from the weather; and fires had be enkindled, and kettles were boiling, in preparation for a fresh supply of cooked provisions.

Voyageurs in their *tuques*, or "bonnets rouges,"* were to be seen trotting round in busy fulfilment of their allotted duties—some engaged in culinary operations, some bending under a supply of dry branches from the recesses of the forest, others engaged in chopping for fuel those already brought.

The eyes of both sisters rested upon the principal figure of the group—the bourgeois—as the near approach of the steamer gave each object more distinctly to view.

He was a young man of something more than middle height, dressed in the ordinary costume of his class—duck trousers, so "spick and span" in their neatness as to attest that he had taken no part in the labors which told so unmistakably on the toilets of the rest of the party, a shirt of clear pink and white calico, and a straw hat wreathed with a band of black ostrich-feathers—while a scarf or sash of crimson worsted around his waist helped to define the symmetrical proportions of his lithe and upright form.

The face of the young man was so shaded by his broad hat that the lookers-on could not determine at once whether

* The red caps worn by the Canadian boatmen.

it was as prepossessing as the rest of his exterior; particularly as, after the first upward glance, he had turned towards a small tent in the background, apparently to give some directions to a knot of clerks who stood near it.

"Quite a nice-looking young fellow you have there, Miss McGregor," said Captain Dalton.

"Yes, by George," said Captain Lovel, "he is that! Rig him up in a uniform and put him on parade, and how the girls would cry, 'Splendid!' 'Oh! bless my stars, ain't he magnificent?' I tell you what," with a laugh, "he casts old Michaud into the shade. My dear, there's Michaud, who took us over to the Sault, the first time we went there —don't you remember? That's he, standing with a paddle in his hand, beside the little tent. I knew Michaud in a minute, by his silvery hair curling over his collar."

"So that is the bourgeois," said Miss McGregor, rather to herself than to Captain Dalton; "he does look, indeed, as if he might be intrusted with the charge of both men and cargoes. The other clerks are not amiss, too. The bourgeois, as it seems he knows that we are on board, will probably come to pay his respects as soon as the boat is made fast."

She continued gazing at the group, surveying with a scrutinizing eye each individual, while the little steamer was "backing and filling," until she finally swung into a spot where, owing to the abrupt shelving of the beach, she could lie in sufficiently deep water, and at the same time be so near the shore that a scaffolding could be run out and dropped upon the land. This arrangement was necessary in order to facilitate the passing and repassing of the party of improvised wood-choppers, or of such of the passengers as might choose to exchange the monotony of the boat for a stroll on shore. Before all these arrangements were completed, the young bourgeois had returned from

the tent, and he now stood with lifted hat, as if recognizing the powers to whom he owed allegiance.

"Upon my word, quite soldierly!" remarked Captain Lovel.

"Or rather, quite aristocratic!" said Captain Lytle, with a touch of sarcasm, for he did not like the approving glance which Miss McGregor bestowed upon the young employé.

"I wish he would hold his hat so as not to shade his face so completely," said Miss Latimer, in a low tone, to Mr. Ewing. "I want to see what sort of countenance and expression he has. A bourgeois! I have heard them talked of, but I had always fancied them something more on a par with the boatmen."

"Bourgeois is simply the technical name for the person in charge," Ewing explained. "He may be merely an engagé, or he may be a clerk—more frequently the latter; and, being a clerk, he is almost sure to be a gentleman. This one, if I mistake not, is of the latter class."

"But where is Madeleine?" inquired Miss McGregor, with sudden recollection. "Miss Latimer, can you tell me what has become of my sister?"

"She said she would go and see a little after M. Rivard," was the reply. "I think she proposed to stay and read awhile to the poor gentleman. Shall I inquire for her?"

"Oh, no, thank you. I dare say she prefers being there, talking about Quebec friends with M. Rivard, who is a neighbor of the Lindsays, as I understand. The boats have very little interest for her. Four, five, seven, nine, eleven—they seem to be all right, monsieur—a clerk to each boat, besides two supernumeraries who were left at Mackinac. Quite a respectable, nice-looking set! Entirely trustworthy, I dare say; for, of course, they all, as well as the bourgeois, are of Mr. Patterson's selection."

CHAPTER XI.

"ARE we going on shore? That is charming! I will find Madeleine and tell her," cried Miss Latimer. She ran to the stairs of the gentlemen's cabin and called,—

"Madeleine, Madeleine, where are you?"

No one answered. She descended the stairs and looked in. There lay M. Rivard asleep upon the lockers, but no Madeleine beside him. After a little further search she found her friend leaning upon the guards on the side of the boat farthest from shore. She looked, Grace thought, a little disturbed—even, she fancied, a shade paler than usual.

"Madeleine, darling, are you not well? Is it the heat, or is it this swinging motion of the boat?"

"It is nothing—I am quite well," said Madeleine, but the tone was not her ordinary cheerful one.

"Something that her sister has been saying to her, doubtless. It cannot be anything she has been hearing or telling about the Quebec friends, for M. Rivard is in the land of dreams."

Such were Miss Latimer's thoughts; but she said, aloud,—

"Come, dear, we are all going on shore as soon as they get the staging ready. They will be waiting for us."

"Oh, I don't know—perhaps I had better not——"

"And why, pray? Surely you are not afraid to go down the staging? That would be a joke! Why, you can have a gentleman on each side to assist you. I thought Western girls were afraid of nothing. Come, your sister was just asking for you."

Thus urged, Madeleine yielded. As she turned to accompany her, Grace saw that she held a letter in her hand which she was thrusting into her pocket.

"Ah!" said Miss Latimer, in a tone of raillery, "have we had a mail by a carrier-dove, and has it thrown us into a reverie—almost into tears?" she added, softening as she looked fully into the countenance of her friend. "Never mind, darling—cheer up. You shall see them all again, and be as happy as the day is long." She kissed her, drew her arm within her own, and together they repaired to the open gangway where the passengers were assembled preparatory to a descent along the steep scaffolding by which they were to reach the shore below.

There was neither difficulty nor danger in the undertaking, though the boards bent and creaked alarmingly under the weight of Mrs. Smart's solid, compact person.

Madeleine was the last to venture. She had stood a few moments gazing upon the scene below, which was exceedingly animated and attractive, as it lay half in shade, half in the warm, yellow light of the afternoon sun. She saw her sister advance, and with stately mien receive the salute of the young bourgeois, and the more bashful obeisances of the inferior clerks. She could see how Monica's features relaxed into a smile as she nodded to the humbler employés, in return for their tug at their fore-top, and thrusting back of the leg, which was their nearest approach to a bow—and how she even vouchsafed a few cordial words in reply to the light and gay remarks of the older voyageurs.

Soon it came her turn to descend.

"Now, don't be timid and lose your balance," cried Miss Latimer, merrily, from below. "I can see from here that you are trembling like an aspen. What a heroine to put into my 'Notes and Observations'!"

"I am not trembling, in the least," said Madeleine; yet Ewing, who stood ready to assist her, was so much of a contrary opinion that, while conducting her with one hand as he advanced, by a retrograde movement, down the plank, he involuntarily put forward his other hand to support her.

Miss McGregor frowned as she observed the interest with which the young bourgeois was watching the proceeding. She noticed that he hardly attended to the words she was addressing him, and that once, when her sister's steps tottered for a moment, he made a slight movement as if he were on the point of stepping forward to her assistance. With sudden recollection, however, he withdrew his eyes, and gave the instructions and inquiries he was receiving the proper attention, Madeleine, in the mean time, strolling a little apart with her friend, who, linking her arm in hers, sauntered with her to a cool, sequestered spot somewhat retired from the observation of the rest of the party.

"Here, let me take off your hat and bathe your face in this cool, clear water," said Miss Latimer. "It will act as a sedative on your nerves. Why, Madeleine, I would never have believed you had so little courage!"

Madeleine laughed, and yet the tears came again as her friend spoke.

"Ah! we are going to be a little hysterical, are we?" said Grace, playfully, at the same time dipping her handkerchief in the water and plashing her friend's face.

"There, go, leave me to myself, and I shall soon feel bright and well again," said Madeleine, as she stooped, and with handfuls of the cool element laved her face and brow until they had recovered, in some measure, their customary hue and expression.

"Now, do you feel like wandering about and exploring a little?" said Miss Latimer.

"No; I will sit here quietly. Leave me for awhile, and come back when you have seen all that you can find to interest you."

"Well, if you insist," said Grace, only half reluctant. "I must, first of all, go and take a peep into the tent yonder and see how these gentry keep house for themselves—and I must have a talk with that fine gray-haired old fellow—and, if I can make myself bold enough, I shall contrive to chat a little with the gentlemanly young bourgeois, as they call him, and learn some of the particulars of his voyage up from Montreal. Who knows but that he may let me into his own history and private affairs as well? He looks quite like a hero of romance. As he stood there talking to your sister, I could not help thinking of a paladin of old, offering his homage to a princess. Now kiss me, dear, and be sure to get over this little spasm before I come back. Perhaps I shall bring you a nice budget of news. Ah! now you are beginning to look better—quite like yourself," as Madeleine smiled her own sweet, gentle smile.

"Poor thing!" said Miss Latimer to herself, as she turned away. "It is no wonder that, at times, she is a little incomprehensible! Never to be allowed the slightest freedom of word or action! It is to be hoped that matters will change when she gets back to her father's arms and her home on the Mississippi. I am certain I could not bear it with such sweet patience if I had a sister like hers."

After Grace left her, Madeleine continued sitting on the fallen log where she had first placed herself, and gazing—now on the pebbly beach at her feet, now on the flash and sparkle of the waves in the brilliant sunlight; yet she hardly saw them, so deeply was she meditating—neither did her ear, for a time, take in a sound—not even the ringing of the axes in the forest around.

At length she roused herself, and, finding that she was not likely to be intruded upon at present, she drew from her pocket the letter which she had thrust into it before leaving the steamer. It was from her friend Clara—one which she had found awaiting her in Detroit, nearly three weeks after they had parted in Quebec. She read it over again carefully, and there was now a sigh and now a smile as she scanned its pages. It was as follows:

"QUEBEC, June 17th, 18—.

"MY DARLING MADELEINE,—Papa has not pronounced an absolute interdict upon our correspondence, though I fear you considered his remark, when we spoke of writing to each other, a virtual prohibition, and therefore would not write to me first.

"I hope I am not undutiful in taking the lead in the matter—but indeed, my dear, I believe papa spoke more from the impulse of the moment than from any settled intention of depriving us of so great a pleasure. He has not felt at ease, as you are aware, since dear Malcolm left us; it is, therefore, not surprising that he should be, at times, irritable and unreasonable to a degree quite foreign to his ordinary temperament and character. Perhaps a leaven is working which will, in time, produce happy results: let us pray that it may be so, for we are all far enough from happy now.

"You will, I am certain, wish for tidings of one for whom you entertain so tender a friendship. My darling, I grieve to say that I have none to impart to you that it is pleasant for me to write. Only one letter since you left, and that anything but consoling. He told me not to be uneasy if I did not hear from him as frequently as heretofore, for he should be absent for a time from New York, and therefore his letters must come to me at rarer intervals than hitherto

—perhaps some weeks even might elapse before I would hear from him again. Does he think I could help being uneasy and very unhappy at such a silence?

"Then he says I 'must not fancy he is going to China, or Chili, or Calcutta'—that 'he is only going to embark in an enterprise which, he thinks, will have an important bearing on the prospects of his future life,' and that 'he knows I will approve of the step he is taking when I come to know all the circumstances connected with it.' Now, this is all Greek to me. If he is going to our uncle in England, as I suppose, why does he not tell me? And why does he talk of my approving it? Dear boy! anything that he thinks best in the painful position in which he is placed will, of course, meet my approbation.

"Good old Graham contrived to bring me this letter, which my brother had sent, under cover, to him. I sometimes fancy my father half suspects him of being a medium of communication between us. It has seemed to me that he has been, of late, more tender than ever of the poor old man, often saying to him at the breakfast-table, 'Captain, I think you had better not go to the office to-day. Sit in your own little room, and, if you must be doing something, let one of the boys bring you up your books and papers.' But poor Captain regularly declines. He would not miss the possible chance of getting a letter and bringing it to me when he comes at one o'clock to luncheon (which my father, you know, never takes). Then, after I have dismissed the servants, he will sit and sip his cup of hot tea, and discourse about 'his bonny boy,' till it generally ends in a good cry on the part of both of us.

"The old gentleman talks about you, too, at times. 'That pretty little white rose,' he will say, 'who could never learn to beat the old man at backgammon—and I *tried* to lose a game to her, too, now and then.' Now,

have not I made you laugh a little? And you would have laughed still more if you could have seen the address of dear Malcolm's letter to him. I am sure the messenger must have wondered, when he brought in the mail, who poor Captain had for correspondent! Such writing!

"I think that our good old friend is failing under this last trial, and I fancy it makes some trouble at the office, for I heard McTavish (your standing aversion) remark, in his flippant way, 'How much better to pay the old man his salary and keep him out of the office altogether!' I could not help replying to him, 'You forget, sir, that Captain Graham is my father's friend, not his pensioner.'

"Few men would show such uniformly delicate, respectful consideration for an old, broken-down, impoverished friend, as my father does. I cannot but admire him for it, and I often ask myself, 'How is it that, with a heart so tender, so full of kind feeling for the rest of the world, the only portion he succeeds in indurating is that which belongs to his only son? and such a son!' I had not the least suspicion, for a long time, of the cause of the estrangement between them. It was because my father wished him to marry one of Colonel Damer's daughters—the tall lady in blue, whom you saw at our house the last party dear mamma gave before she was taken ill. She is very pretty and accomplished, but if Malcolm did not love her I think he was right not to marry her. I told you my opinion, you recollect, before you left, though I did not before give you all these particulars. I thought it was a matter between him and my father, until Louisa's letter came. She takes strong ground against my poor brother—thinks him quite insensible to the 'honor of his family,' as well as to the wishes of his friends. What she means I cannot understand. The honor of our family, it seems to me, does not need the support of the Damer alli-

ance. I fancy the old friendship between Colonel Damer and Lord Crayfield's father may have influenced Louisa's opinions in a measure—the 'pomps and vanities,' etc. have done the rest. Poor, dear sister! Malcolm says in his letter, 'Tell my little friend she promised to think of me every time she looked at the rainbow;' but, darling, it is coming winter by-and-by, when there will be no rainbows! Still, you must not forget him—for my sake, remember, as well as his own. Well, good-night, my dear, darling Madeleine. Write to me often—you may venture to do so. May our Father in heaven send his holy angels to guard you! Your ever-loving, lonely CLARA."

CHAPTER XII.

IN her spirit of enterprise, having undertaken to watch carefully over her father's interests, Miss McGregor had at first designed to take passage for the return home of herself and party in the Company's boats from Montreal to Mackinac. This project was laid aside in compliance with a wish expressed in a letter from her father, that both sisters should visit Boston and Niagara before their return to the West. She had, therefore, contented herself with a trip to Montreal, to confer with Mr. Patterson in regard to "the outfit," and then returned to Quebec for her sister, with whom and M. Tremblay she journeyed through the Eastern cities, arriving at Buffalo in time to put down their names in the Uncle Sam as passengers from Detroit to Green Bay, but taking passage to the former place in the little Pioneer, some days in advance, and thus securing a visit to certain friends in that place.

There were, in that day, two routes for the transportation of the annual supply of boats and men from Montreal to Mackinac, the great entrepôt of the American Fur Company. The time had been when these boats were the only means of conveyance for the heavy cargoes of all the varied articles necessary in the Indian trade, as well as for the comfort of those employed in the vast domain where the outposts of the Company were located.

The number of boats purchased and sent each season varied from eight to sixteen. Six or eight of the gay, hardy race of Canadian voyageurs as crews, with perhaps a couple of supernumerary engagés, and a clerk to superintend, were the ordinary complement for bringing each boat the long, devious, difficult route across the Province of Canada to the broad waters where navigation was no longer a toil. To accomplish this transit, what was known as "the lower route" was the one most frequently chosen.

By this, the party ascended the St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario to Little York, now the city of Toronto. Oxen and stout carts, which had formed part of the lading of the boats, were here put in travelling order, and by their means both boats and cargoes were transported over a stretch of eighteen miles to Lake Simcoe. Here the carts were *démontée*, or again taken apart, and packed as before, until this lake was passed and the last portage reached, when the cattle were disposed of to the settlers around, and the little fleet made its way down the Missipeecoton River to the broad and beautiful Lake Huron. Coasting along the shores of this vast expanse, sometimes venturing to put up a sail and stretch from point to point, but more frequently depending on their oars alone, the voyageurs would at length reach their place of destination—Michilimackinac.

In process of time, when the facilities of communication had so far increased as to allow the large supplies of blan-

kets, cloths, calicoes, Northwest guns, powder and shot, to say nothing of "whiskey and other knick-knacks" plentifully used in the Indian trade, to be brought to Mackinac in vessels of larger size across Lake Erie, the boats from Montreal came up comparatively "light," and then the upper and more attractive route was most frequently chosen.

The portages on this route were made in a different manner from that observed on the other—the loading being packed upon the shoulders of certain of the voyageurs, while the boats were, by the aid of a long rope and the good muscles of the rest of the crew, drawn up the rapids.

This latter route was the one which had been chosen by Logan; and had it suited the young man to gratify Miss Latimer's curiosity by giving her a detailed account of his adventures, his narrative would unquestionably have helped to deepen her conviction that she was indeed in the land of romance.

There was so much in this charming and picturesque voyage to repay the traveller for the toils and inconveniences incident to it, that, with the exception of the single feature of Niagara, the young ladies might well have given up the whole route by which they reached Mackinac in exchange for its enjoyment.

Their very first experience, the ascent *à cordon* of the long, foaming rapid of Le Saut St. Louis, would have filled them with delight; and still more touching would have been the customary visit to the little church of St. Ann's, where, if devotionally inclined, they might "sing their parting hymn," and even join the simple voyageur in his petitions to the "saint of the green isle" that he would grant them "a cool heaven and favoring air."

The young bourgeois, not insensible to the beauties of Nature, had felt keenly the want of some sympathizing companion in the appreciation of all that he met to gratify

the eye and the ear, from the first hour of his embarkation. It was not until after floating over the classical expanse of "Utáwa's tide," and nearing the confluence with it of the Rideau or Curtain River, that he fully felt how "one touch of Nature makes the whole world kin."

This smaller river falls, just at its mouth, over a rock some thirty feet in height, the cascade being divided midway by a little island, tufted with evergreens, and parting the waters in such a fashion as to give the whole the appearance of a white curtain drawn to either side. The scene, as they approached, was lighted up by the golden and crimson rays of the afternoon sun, forming a landscape of surpassing beauty. The exclamations of delight from the untutored voyageurs who looked upon it for the first time caused an added thrill of pleasure in the breast of their leader, even though their rapturous feelings were expressed in language which might savor of irreverence.

"Eh—h—h! Saint Baptême! Comme c'est joli ça!"*

"Regardez! regardez! C'est la fenêtre du bon Dieu et des saints anges!"†

"Quelles merveilles! Quels miracles! Sacré mon diable!"‡

The "hivernants"—those who had made the voyage before—preserved a lofty silence; but the bourgeois felt half his load of solitude lightened by these occasional demonstrations from the unsophisticated "mangeurs de lard."§

Anxious to fulfil the injunctions of Mr. Patterson, who had explained to him his reasons for wishing that the trans-

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* Holy Baptism! How pretty that is!

† Look! look! That is the window of God and the holy angels!

‡ What wonders! Confound the devil!

§ Novices—literally, pork-eaters.

portation of his supplies to the Mississippi should be made with the greatest dispatch possible, the young bourgeois would rouse his men each morning at "peep of dawn," and push forward, never sparing his own exertions in transporting burdens around the portages, nor shrinking from taking to the water with the others when the boats were to be dragged by main force through the rapids. A long rest through the burning heat of the day would refresh all hands for a vigorous pull during the evening hours, and often far into the night; such was the zeal with which Logan, with his adjutant Michaud, had succeeded in inspiring the voyageurs for carrying out his design of making the trip in a shorter time than it had ever been made before. The reason for Patterson's injunctions to unwonted celerity will appear in due time; Logan, for his part, was nowise backward in fulfilling the old gentleman's behests.

Not even upon the long stretches of the Ottawa River did he allow to be heard the gentle, plaintive chaunt which we are accustomed to call *par excellence* The Canadian Boat-Song. Instead of its pensive strains there would resound in emulative chorus the lively refrain,—

"Derrière chez-nous il y a une orme,
Pour voici le joli mois du Mai,
Qui tous les ans rapport une pomme,
Car voici le joli mois qu'il donne,
Pour voici le joli mois du Mai."*

The honest voyageurs trolled out in good faith this horticultural miracle, as they did the irreverent satire of a succeeding verse:—

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* Behind our house is an elm-tree,
Which every year bears an apple,
For this is the pleasant month of May.

"Par ici ont passées trois nonnes,
Pour voici le joli mois du Mai,
Les plus jeunes filles les plus friponnes,
Pour voici le joli mois qu'il donne,
Pour voici le joli mois du Mai."*

Another ballad which always possessed an inspiring charm for the crew was a string of advice, corresponding in sentiment with the popular little refrain, "Tu t'en répentiras, Colin,"—

"Par-derrière chez ma tante, Par-derrière chez ma tante,
Il y a un coq qui chante, Demande une femme à prendre.
Chorus.—Des pommes, des poires, des raves, des choux,
Des figues nouvelles, des raisins doux."†

And, as it goes on, partners of whatever complexion are successively rejected:—

"Ne prenez pas une noire,
Car elles aiment trop à boire;
Ne prenez pas une rousse,
Car elles sont trop jalouses;
Ne prenez pas une blanche,
Car elles sont trop chargeantes;
Ne prenez pas une brune,
Car elles gardent trop rancune,"‡ etc. etc.

One of the most striking features of the voyage was *Les*

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* Three nuns have passed by—
The youngest damsels are the most roguish,
For this is the pleasant month of May.

† Behind the house of my aunt there is a cock who crows,
And asks what wife he shall take.
Chorus.—Apples, pears, radishes, cabbages,
Fresh figs, and sweet grapes.

‡ Do not take a black one—they are too fond of drinking;
Do not take a red one—they are too jealous;
Do not take a white one—they are too expensive;
Do not take a brown one—they are too sulky, etc. etc.

Chaudières, or Kettle Falls. A rock extending from shore to shore, here intercepted the course of the Ottawa River. So completely was the stream cut off that no water could be seen falling over the cliff, and one might fancy it lost in the bowels of the earth, did it not, after working its way through various subterranean channels and fissures of the rock, again make its appearance, after an interval, boiling and foaming up from below, like water in a huge caldron —whence its name.

With a celerity hitherto unknown in the annals of voyaging, our young bourgeois and his engagés pursued their way, passing the "Portage des deux Joachims," crossing the broad Lake Nipissing, and finally reaching French River, which they descended to Lake Huron. The weather favored their passage among the islands and along the coast, and there were not wanting occasional breezes, by the aid of which they could spread their sails and, darting from point to point, avoid the sinuosities and indentations of the numerous little bays.

Old Michaud was upon all occasions the oracle, for he was that honored person "un hivernant"—and the bourgeois suffered himself in all doubtful matters to be guided by the counsels and experience of the quaint and simple-hearted old voyageur. Thus the party, to the pride and satisfaction of the bourgeois, reached Mackinac, as we have seen, the day before the arrival of the Uncle Sam.

Not a day could be given to the crew for their customary holiday—that is to say, for the recreations of drinking, fighting, and getting disciplined for the same.

Instead of this,—and how it was accomplished Mr. Malcolm could not divine,—the little fleet was away again on the second morning, coasting the northern shore of the straits towards the famous Seul Choix, a point whence they could shoot across to the Pottowattamie Islands, along and

among which they might, in comparative tranquillity, continue their course to Green Bay, the next important halting-place upon their route.

CHAPTER XIII.

As Madeleine at length left her position on the log by the side of the lake, and came forward into the open space, she was called to by her sister, who was still occupied in taking information, inspecting, and advising.

"Madeleine, come here, if you please."

The young girl advanced slowly.

"This is the bourgeois, Mr. Logan. It is proper that you should join me in thanking him for having acquitted himself so satisfactorily in the charge intrusted to him."

The color mounted into the young man's face. Madeleine colored too, at an address which might have been the commendation of a menial. She bent a low and courteous salute, without, however, proffering a word. The acknowledgment of the introduction, if such it could be called, was, on the part of the bourgeois, equally courteous and equally silent.

Miss McGregor looked annoyed; then, again addressing her sister, she said, coldly,—

"And here is Ducharme—at least you can speak to *him*. Michaud!"

The old voyageur came forward, bending low, and with the significant gesture of the hand to the forehead, as he removed the pipe from his mouth to make room for the inevitable,—

"Excusez la politesse d'un grossier."*

"This is my sister, Michaud—you have not seen her before."

"Oh, pardon! j'ai déjà vu mademoiselle, il y a trois ans, je crais. Seigneur! Comme elle a grandie! La demoiselle se porte-elle bien?"†

"Very well, thank you," replied the young lady, in French. "And you, Michaud, have you had a nice voyage? What admirable speed you have made!—a shorter trip than was ever made before. How pleased my father will be!"

The old man ducked his head with successive bows, and, smiling, displayed a set of square, regular teeth, slightly embrowned, it is true, by tobacco and kinnikinnick, yet not one of which was wanting.

"Now, we shall expect you to take us home in the best of time, Michaud. After we leave the steamer at the Bay, you know, we shall be entirely under your care."

She chatted thus affably, the old man looking more and more delighted with every word she uttered. Not so her sister, who soon found occasion to whisper to her,—

"It seems to me better policy to be a little civil to the bourgeois. Certainly as much depends upon him as upon Michaud. Why should we offend a person in his position?"

Madeleine, without acting upon the hint, turned to seek her friend Miss Latimer, who had advanced a little into the shelter of the wood, where a group of young voyageurs were seated around a pan of corn soup, each helping himself to his share with his little wooden ladle.

"The new recruits, *mangeurs de lard*, as we call them,

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* "Excuse my clownish politeness."

† "Oh, yes! I have already seen the young lady, three years ago, I believe. How she has grown! Is she well?"

are kept by the older hands, as a class by themselves"—Mr. Ewing was explaining thus to Miss Latimer, while the Commissioner was entering in his note-book both that, and whatever other fact he could catch a hint of, in his progress from group to group.

"Was your curiosity gratified by an inspection of the tent?" asked Madeleine, in a tone which, although low, caught the ear of the Commissioner.

"The tent? Ah! yes, the tent of the bourgeois!" he exclaimed. "Doubtless we may find something peculiar in its construction and arrangement. I would suggest a walk in that direction."

"You will find nothing unusual or peculiar to reward you," replied Mr. Ewing. "Still, we may as well take it in our way to the boat," he added, as the bell for supper now began to make its din heard above all other sounds.

The two rival officers had not intruded upon Miss McGregor while she was occupied with her own immediate affairs. They had contented themselves with furtively watching each other, until she should be at liberty to receive their attentions; now they both darted forward at the sound of the bell, eager to aid her in ascending the platform.

M. Tremblay, to whose views and opinions not the slightest reference had, thus far, been made, hazarded a parting remark to the bourgeois,—

"We shall go now in de steam-boat, and bum-by we come to de bay—den we wait for you. Some people shall tell you were you shall aspect to find us."

"For fear they should not, however," added Miss McGregor, "it may be as well for you to know that we shall be at Monsieur Berthelet's, quite near the Company's warehouse. You will, of course," with a condescending

gesture to the young man, "call to report your arrival at the earliest possible moment."

Her intimation was received with a formal inclination of the head, which deepened into a more deferential salutation to the younger sister, as the elder swept by and allowed herself to be escorted by her two cavaliers to the deck of the Uncle Sam.

In due time the last wood-party with its burden was on board, and before the light of the departed sun had quite faded from the western sky the little steamer was again ploughing its way over the green waters of the Bay.

It was not, however, to reach its point of destination without further adventure.

From no want of skill in Captain Blunt or his pilot, but owing simply to the ever-shifting channel through the sandy bars and spits abounding in the estuary, the little craft grounded on the flats, a few miles below the fort which guarded the entrance to the Fox River. This was no unusual occurrence, and it was always one which necessitated the transfer of such as could not wait the results of time (tides there were none in those waters) to small boats, invariably dispatched from both fort and village to assist in bringing up to the settlement the passengers with their luggage.

Several of these little "lighters" sped their way to the Uncle Sam as soon as it was understood what her predicament was. Hardly had they come within hailing-distance when one and another voice was heard shouting,—

"Have you heard the news?"

"Of course not. How should we, out in the broad lake? What is it?"

"Oh! the Indians—all up in arms! Killing and scalping!"

"What! here among you? Here at the Bay?"

"Not exactly down here yet, though of course they soon will be."

The moment the speakers had mounted to the deck, all on board were crowding around them, to gather particulars. Mrs. Smart, with her sturdy shoulders, had greatly the advantage in pushing herself into the foremost rank of eager inquirers. Madeleine, pale as death, yet wore a face a shade less ghastly than that of Lieutenant Smithett, as he turned from one to another, asking, in an agitated voice,—

"Are you sure this is true? How do you get the news?"

"Oh," was the ready answer, "there are always plenty of friendly Indians, you know, coming and going."

"And, besides, a boat on her way up to the Portage was turned back several days ago, by the old chief Four-Legs, with the warning that there was no road through his country now."

The eyes of all the company seemed by common impulse to turn to Miss McGregor.

"Foolish reports, brought by some faint-hearted coward!" she said, scornfully.

"Pardon me, madam, but I think you are mistaken," said an officer, who, having enjoyed the triumph of being the first to communicate this thrilling piece of news, was now warmly welcoming Captain and Mrs. Lovel and others of his acquaintance.

"For my part, I have not the least doubt that trouble is brewing up there," said the Governor, calmly. "I told them how it would be, if they did not maintain a sufficient force on our frontier, particularly in the neighborhood of the mineral lands, to keep trespassers off. If we allow these diggers to run over the lines by hundreds, and spoil the hunting-grounds of the Indians, we must look for trouble. I warned Government how it would be—that if

we did not protect the Indians they would protect themselves, and in a way we should not soon forget. They did not heed what I said, and now we must look for the consequences."

Madeleine listened with a countenance of terror. Her hands were clasped, and, with an appealing look towards her sister, she almost sobbed forth,—

"Oh, Monica, what shall we do? How are we to get to papa? Think of him, in the midst of all these—these horrors!"

"Have no fears, Madeleine. Even if this is all true, which I very much doubt, what can harm our father? And who will stay *us* in going to him?"

She raised her head rather loftily as she uttered these words.

"Nevertheless, let me tell you, it is a pretty serious matter, madam," said the officer who had before spoken, and who seemed to be a man of some experience. "There can be no room to doubt that a feeling of dissatisfaction is very generally cherished among both the Sauks and Foxes and the Winnebagoes, and also that the latter are endeavoring to stir up the Menomonees and Chippewas to join them in decided steps of hostility. I do not say they have not cause—we all know they have *just* cause. And we cannot be ignorant of another thing—that at this very moment their intentions, of whatever nature, are well known to the British authorities, and that the different tribes are by them being supplied with the sinews of war. If there were an unfriendly Indian council held at Four-Legs' village, for instance, the officers at Drummond's Island would know every particular of it before we, close at hand, should begin even to scent the danger."

"But what, then, will become of our proposed treaty?" said the Commissioner. "It will not be a pleasant thing

to go and attempt to sit down with chiefs and warriors while matters are in this state!"

"No, no; something must be done," said the Governor. "We will see—we will see. I told them how it would be—that they had better not draw off so great a portion of the troops in this neighborhood and send them to still more remote posts; but they would not listen to me. Now that the Indians have been intruded upon and harassed and persecuted by those miserable wretches who infest our frontiers, a spirit is aroused which it will not be easy to quell. Those who manage our affairs have had their own way, but unhappily it will be the innocent who will suffer for it."

As neither the facts in the case, nor the proper manner of meeting them, could be settled by a discussion on the decks of the Uncle Sam, the passengers, with trembling haste, betook themselves to selecting and making ready their baggage, and to other preliminaries for an embarkation on board one or another of the smaller boats in which they were to be rowed—some to the eastern bank of the Fox River, along which lay the scattered settlements called "the town;" others to the western shore, upon a point of which stood the not very imposing picketed inclosure of Fort Howard.

"We will not say good-by," said Miss Latimer, kissing her friend affectionately, "for we shall see each other, I hope, quite often, while you are here. You will come every day to the Fort, will you not?"

"Oh, I don't know, dear Grace, what we shall do," said Madeleine, in a troubled voice. "We expected to have set out for home as soon as the boats with their crews should arrive, but it seems now as if that would be out of the question—unless Monica should insist on pushing right on, and braving the danger. I wish I were as heroic as

she is; but I am nôt—the very thought of these terrible people makes my heart's blood curdle. Oh! she must not go—she must not go!"

"No, dear, she will not, I am sure she will not, till all is again quiet and safe," said Miss Latimer, soothingly. "Your friends will not allow such a thing. Perhaps the Governor will devise some means of tranquillizing the tribes before long, or he may get the commanding officer at the Fort to send an escort of soldiers to protect you. Or your father, apprehending danger, may send trusty Indians to conduct you home. A thousand things may happen. Don't suffer yourself to feel despondent—take courage! All will go well, depend upon it."

Thus Miss Latimer comforted her friend, and they parted, promising to meet as often as possible — sometimes at Shanty-town (the euphonious name of that part of the settlement where stood M. Berthelet's residence), sometimes at the garrison, to which they received an earnest invitation from Mrs. Lovel, as well as from Grace, on the part of her cousin, Mrs. Holcomb.

"Good in the guise of evil," said Captain Lytle, in a low tone, as he was about handing Miss McGregor through the side gangway into the little boat, in which stood Mr. Ewing, ready to assist her descent. "The gods are propitious to me. They are ordering matters so as to keep you here till after I get through my exploring trip down the Bay. I foresee that I am to have the happiness of finding you here on my return."

There was a tone of assumption in the speech that Miss McGregor did not quite like. She colored slightly; she was not one with whom any one could presume with impunity; still, she remembered that some allowance should be made for the excitement into which the disturbing news they had just received had thrown the whole

party. She, therefore, although a little more stately than usual in her manner, took, upon the whole, a more amiable leave of her gallant attendant than quite suited Captain Dalton, who was forced to content himself with a simple "Good-morning," in return for his best bow and most smiling "Au revoir."

CHAPTER XIV.

"So, this is the Fort!" said Miss Latimer, as she passed in through the gateway—a large, square, ungainly opening in the ancient, whitewashed pickets which gave entrance to the parade-ground.

She gazed with amused astonishment on the long ranges of quarters and barracks, each propped by huge beams of timber placed slantwise from the ground to the upper story, as if to keep the fabric from falling forward.

Poor Lieutenant Smithett looked perfectly aghast as he contemplated his future home. He glanced around for Mrs. Smart, his never-failing resource in trouble, but she had stopped at the quarters her husband had provided for her outside the walls.

"Good gracious!" he exclaimed, at length, not caring exactly whom he addressed, "they surely don't expect people to put up with such accommodations as these! Why, they look as if they might tumble to pieces any minute. And I dare say they are full of all sorts of things! It wouldn't be very difficult, either, I should think, for the Indians to batter down that old log fence, if they set about it in earnest. I do think it is positively shameful! But what in the world is that man walking along on the top of the fence for?"

The question was addressed to Captain Lovel, who happened to be nearest him.

"I rather think he has been out on a frolic, and they've put him up there for punishment," replied the captain, with perfect seriousness.

"Oh, my dear, don't plague the young man," said Mrs. Lovel, kindly. "It is a sentinel, sir—one that keeps guard, and gives notice of the approach of danger."

"I've seen sentinels before, plenty of times," said the young man, "but they always walked on the ground. It was that, I suppose, that confused me. It strikes me, however, that this is a very capital arrangement, particularly in times like these. Pray, ma'am, do you think it is safe for me to leave my luggage with those soldiers there, till I find out where they have got to carry it? Are the soldiers about here honest?"

Mrs. Lovel assured him his trunks would be perfectly safe; then, leaving him, they walked on with Miss Latimer to the quarters of her cousin, Mrs. Holcomb.

There was no choice in the ranges of quarters—those of the commanding officer and the youngest second lieutenant being alike dilapidated. Mrs. Holcomb's were neither better nor worse, except that they were more carelessly kept than those of her neighbors.

A narrow entry opened into a tolerable-sized parlor, furnished with a carpet, a rigid-looking settee covered with worn and faded chintz, a square pine table, the homely proportions of which were only partially concealed by a red-and-blue cotton table-cover, and half a dozen chairs, of different sizes and patterns. The open fire-place was filled with dry and dusty branches of asparagus, and further garnished with all the sweepings of waste paper and clippings of various colors which had been brushed from the floor for—the housemaid only could tell how long.

Captain Lovel's loud rap on the parlor door was answered by a "Come in," in a tone as if no very particular company was expected. A rather pretty woman was seated in a rocking-chair, busily engaged in fabricating a head-dress out of ribbon and artificial flowers, sundry boxes of which encumbered the chairs and littered the floor around her.

"My goodness gracious! Grace Latimer, is this you?" she cried, springing up and scattering her finery in all directions, as the smiling face of her cousin peeped in upon her. She seized and kissed her with an air of earnest, affectionate welcome.

"Oh, I am so glad you have come! But who in the world expected you just now?"

"Didn't you? Haven't you received your father's letter telling you that I was coming?"

"Oh, yes; but that was ever so long ago. I thought you had perhaps changed your mind about it—most people are so uncertain."

"No, indeed, not after having promised to come. But you know the journey cannot be made in a day, nor a week—hardly in a month."

"Oh, yes," with a sigh of discontent, "I know only too well how far we are from all that's worth having or living for. Mrs. Lovel, do sit down. How have you been enjoying yourself? Delightfully, I suppose—everybody does that goes to the interior—and everybody can go except poor unlucky me. I'm the only one. Well, good-morning, then, since you must go. I shall be over soon, to see all the pretty things you have brought, and to get a description of all you have seen and enjoyed. Good-by, captain—I expect, when I see you again, to hear a choice collection of stories and anecdotes that you have picked up on your trip."

Laughter having chased away her sighs and murmurs, Mrs. Holcomb turned to her cousin.

"Come, take off your things. Dear me! is that the fashion for hats now? It looks rather odd—of course it would to us, for we never see anything new out here. And your travelling-dress—what do you call this? Neapolitan crape? It is rather pretty, but I don't think I like it quite as well as pongee. I suppose you've brought lots of pretty things. What has papa sent me?"

"Oh, you shall see when my trunks come," said her cousin, smiling. "But where is Mr. Holcomb? I suppose he is on duty."

"Duty!" exclaimed Mrs. Holcomb, in an accent of derision. "The last thing he troubles himself about. No—he's off on some frolic, I suppose. He said the Colonel had sent him up to the Kakalin to get what information he could about the Indians; but I didn't believe a word of it. It was only an excuse to get off with Barnes, and over to Shanty-town with Joe Hollister and that set."

Grace was shocked. She tried to answer composedly as she remarked, "Ah! if your husband is away, that explains how you happened not to hear of the arrival of the Uncle Sam, or rather of her being on the bar below."

"And who came with you? Anybody worth looking at? Any young officers? Not that I need care, for I am never fit to be seen nowadays. I never have anything new. When the sutler gets on his goods there is always some old bill to be paid before I can take my pick; and as Holcomb regularly makes a fuss and a blow-out before he can get his accounts settled, the other ladies contrive to help themselves to everything that is worth having before I can get a chance."

"Perhaps you will be able to take your first chance now," said Grace, with beaming eyes.

"Oh, you don't say so! Has papa sent me some money? Dear old fellow! Now if somebody don't get come up with! Not one penny of it will he touch. I warned him of it last Christmas, when I wanted a beautiful pink silk that Scott had just opened—the loveliest thing, Grace, you ever saw—and I couldn't have it, because he had been and spent every cent that he had on supper-parties, and frolics, and I can't tell you what all."

"We mustn't forget, dear, that your husband has the household expenses, too, to settle out of his pay," said her cousin, wishing to soothe her.

"I rather think I know all about those things quite as well as you can do," said Mrs. Holcomb. "Why should it be any harder for him to give me such a dress than for Captain Wardell to buy it for his wife, and they with three children to provide for? I had the mortification of seeing her shining out in it after I had told two or three of the ladies that I meant to have it. I put up with it then, but I determined in the Easter holidays, when the officers of the mess were going to give a ball, that I would have something new and handsome, if I had to get it on tick. I knew he would have to pay for it in the end, and so I was goose enough to tell him. What do you think he did? Went and gave the sutler an acknowledgment, or something of that kind, that the fellow could present at the pay-table and draw my husband's pay on it! Did you ever hear of anything so scandalous—so degrading? Letting himself down like a common soldier. And the money he spends himself for baskets and baskets of champagne, and such things, to carouse with at his oyster-suppers with the young men! Oh, Grace! I have had everything in the world to go through with!" And here Mrs. Holcomb burst into a fit of weeping. Her cousin comforted her with hopes of better things in future.

"Oh, yes," she said, with animation, "I know it will be different now—Mr. Charlie Holcomb will find that there will be a vast deal of difference. I sha'n't let him know that papa has sent me any money—and, Grace, don't you tell him, on any account. I shall just go to Scott's and buy what I like, and when he sees me come out in all the nice things I've bought, won't he be in a fume? He will post right over to the shanty* to find out if there are any bills against him."

"When he finds there are not, he will of course understand that my uncle has kindly taken care of you," said Miss Latimer.

"Of course he'll ask me if papa sent me this and that, and I shall tell him no."

"Then he will be puzzled, certainly—he will think it is *I* who have been making you presents."

"Not he—he will know better than that. *You* make me such presents? No, indeed—he will think it is some of the young officers—and won't he be in a tantrum?"

"I should think he would, indeed! But you would not be willing, Edith, that he should entertain such an idea for a moment?"

"Wouldn't I? Indeed, I think it would be perfectly fair to pay him off in his own coin. Here he goes off frolicking and merry-making, leaving me moping and lonely, while he is away enjoying himself—besides squandering the money that would enable me to make a figure like the other ladies! He knows I don't care for giving parties and entertainments—they are expensive, and they are a great trouble—but I do care for dressing becomingly and as well as other people. That's one reason why I wanted you here—I knew he would be ashamed to act so

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* The sutler's store.

niggardly towards me if I told him before you that I must have such and such things. Though I must own," said Mrs. Holcomb, pursuing her complimentary strain, "that I had not the least idea you would actually come; and, dear me! there are your trunks that the soldiers are bringing in! Where they are to put them is more than I can tell. If Holcomb had only stayed at home and found out that the boat was coming, so that I could have made some sort of arrangement!"

"Had they not better be taken right up to my room?" asked Grace, not in the least comprehending her cousin's difficulty.

"Your room!" exclaimed Mrs. Holcomb, with a little laugh of embarrassment and vexation. "Bless your heart, child, I only wish somebody would be so good as to find out where that is. Holcomb is entitled to only two rooms —indeed, strictly speaking, he has no right to more than one—only, as we have not been greatly crowded in the garrison, I insisted on the quartermaster's giving us these two—my parlor here and our bedroom. Mrs. Captain Wardell *would* have three, on account, she said, of her children; but she has not the least business with them in the world. It was shameful in the quartermaster, not cutting her down to her allowance. I don't pretend to see how she gets round Hamilton in the way she does!"

Miss Latimer said nothing—what indeed could she say? This was a difficulty so unexpected, so unheard-of, in the annals of hospitality!

"Well, let's see—something has got to be done, I suppose," pursued the mistress, with clouded brow. "The room overhead would be just the thing for you, but Tibbets has got that—a nasty, crusty old bachelor! And you might as well expect the commanding officer to vacate for your accommodation as old Tib. Then there's the room

back of him—Gaylord has got that; I dare say he would move out of it, however, in a moment, if there was only some other place for him to go to. I'll send right up and ask him to come down here, and we will talk about it—it is but trying—he can go into a little room there is vacant over in the next set."

"Oh, pray don't," said Grace. "I had no idea—I could not think of such a thing as turning a gentleman out of his apartment."

"Well, let us hear if there is anything better that you *could* think of," said her cousin, a little sharply.

"Is there no place? I do not care how small it is—a closet, or a garret? Anything will do."

"Yes, I dare say—but unfortunately the anything is just what we don't happen to have. There is, as I told you, just this room and my bedroom back of it, with a little bit of a seven-by-nine kitchen in the rear; and there Norah sleeps. That is the extent of our quarters. We are as well off as most of our neighbors, however. When Mrs. Blake had her sister here with her last year, she had to get a piece of furniture-chintz and make a curtain the whole width of her bedroom, to divide it off and give Nannie half of it."

"Even that would be better than intruding upon a stranger and turning him out of his room," said Miss Latimer, perplexed and distressed beyond measure.

"Mr. Holcomb would probably be very far from coinciding in your opinion," said his wife, with dignity. "He would not understand not having his room to himself; for, in the first place, he requires a good deal of space to rage about in when he gets into his tantrums; and then, to tell the truth, there are a great many times when it would not be particularly pleasant for you, Grace, to be behind the curtain, hearing all that is said backward and forward, for

I don't pretend that we live like turtle-doves always. Who would, with all that I have to put up with?"

Both were silent for a few minutes. Miss Latimer was the first to speak.

"Has Mrs. Lovel, being a captain's wife, the same allowance of quarters as the other lady of whom you spoke?"

"I dare say she has—I presume she takes care of herself. Why?"

"Because," said Grace, beginning to tie her hat again, "I should have no hesitation whatever in asking her to let me occupy her spare room. She gave me a pressing invitation to pass a part of my time with her, and I should much prefer asking a favor of her, to adopting any other plan that seems to offer. If you will only direct me where to find her quarters——"

"Well, upon my word, Grace, that is pretty, I must say! Papa is at the expense of sending you all the way out here to keep me company, and you are proposing to run off and stay with somebody else, before you have even got your things off!"

"No, I am not proposing to run off. I can come and take my meals with you, and bear you company through the day, just the same as if I had my lodgings on the same entry."

"No, indeed; I shall listen to nothing of the kind. Papa would never forgive me, if he was to hear of it. I might bid good-by to all thoughts of presents or anything else from him, for years and years. I know how he takes anything that you are concerned in—one would think *you* were his daughter and I was somebody else. No; we will manage somehow. Go into my room now, and take off your things, and unlock your trunks. I will have them carried there for the present, and I will send for the quartermaster and have a talk with him; we will settle on something."

Mrs. Holcomb summoned Norah from the kitchen, and sent her to the neighboring barracks for the soldier who, when off duty, fulfilled the office of errand-boy, waiter, et cetera.

"Conroy, take those trunks into the lieutenant's room, and then go over to the quartermaster's, and give him Mrs. Holcomb's compliments, and say she would be very happy to see Lieutenant Hamilton at her quarters for a few minutes. Now, Grace, you can come in here," said her cousin, opening the door of an apartment in which everything stood at sixes and sevens. "You may leave the door ajar, if you like—it may give you a new wrinkle, to hear how we ladies in the army have to manage to get what we want out of the quartermaster."

In an incredibly short time Conroy returned; he delivered the reply to his mistress's message with a cheerful air.

"If you please, ma'am, the quartermaster sends his polite love, and he can't possibly come, bekase he's on duty."

"His polite love! You are a goose, Conroy—and the quartermaster is——" She checked herself. "When you bring a message from a gentleman again, remember to say 'compliments,' or 'respects.' What is the quartermaster doing?"

"Sitting in his chair, smoking a cigar, if you please, ma'am, and talking with Lieutenant Tibbets and a strange officer."

"It's just an excuse to keep away—he knows I want something," muttered the lady. "Wait a minute, till I write a note, Conroy."

She seized a pen from a dusty inkstand that stood upon the table, and, selecting a very dainty little sheet of note-paper from a gaily-embroidered portfolio by its side, she wrote a few hasty lines:—

"Mrs. Lieutenant Holcomb—being *quite indisposed* to-day, and unable to call at the quartermaster's office, in her husband's absence, upon a little business of an important nature—begs the favor of Lieutenant Hamilton, as an exceedingly great kindness, that he would step over to her quarters for a few minutes."

"There, I think that will bring him," said Mrs. Holcomb, as she showed the missive to her cousin.

And it did; for in a few minutes a tall, angular, and by no means impressible-looking young officer was ushered by Conroy into the apartment.

CHAPTER XV.

Mrs. Holcomb had had just time to scramble up her stray parcels of finery and thrust them aside; then, assuming that sort of plaintive air that comported with the tenor of her note, she reclined in her arm-chair, and was ready to receive her visitor.

"Sorry to hear you're not well, ma'am," was his rather stiff salutation.

"And I am extremely sorry, Mr. Hamilton," said the lady, blandly, and evading a direct reply, "to have given you the trouble of leaving *your friends.*"

She laid a slight stress on the last words, for she thought it politic to convict him of prevarication in the excuse he had sent her. The quartermaster reddened a little, in spite of himself, and the lady went on, as blandly as before,—

"If it had been possible, I would have waited for my husband's return—he has gone up to the Kakalin on public business, of, I suppose, very great importance. He

really could have attended to the matter so much better than I, that I cannot but regret it should have fallen to my share—I am always so exceedingly reluctant to trouble a gentleman—but, really, I—it positively makes me quite uncomfortable——"

"Anything I can do for you, ma'am?" said the quartermaster, pitying what he supposed to be the lady's embarrassment; for though often, as his comrades expressed it, "pestered out of his wits" by the freakish Mrs. Holcomb, he was not an unfeeling man.

"Well, I suppose I may as well undertake to explain to you," said the lady, after a moment's apparent hesitation, "how very peculiarly I happen to be situated. I think you will understand—that is, you will excuse—the case is this. My father, Colonel Latimer—I beg his pardon, I should say General Latimer, for he has just been brevetted, I learn—General Latimer, of the Artillery, is, of course, known to you by name?"

"Perfectly well, ma'am. There is no officer in the army to whom General Latimer is not well known, by reputation at least."

"Yes, I flatter myself he is generally an object of respect. Well, as I was saying, he has sent his favorite niece—a most charming and interesting young lady, by-the-by—out here to make me a short visit, and to see something of the West. Not that there is much to see, as you and I well know, Mr. Hamilton," with an engaging laugh.

"The post is a very pleasant one, as far as I am concerned, ma'am," said Mr. Hamilton.

"Oh, for gentlemen, I grant you. They have not the thousand-and-one petty cares and perplexities that annoy us poor ladies. What I wanted to inquire was, whether there is not a vacant room over in the adjoining set of

quarters. It strikes me that the front room, over Mrs. Lovel's parlor, is unoccupied."

"It has been until now, but a young officer, who came in the Uncle Sam, has just made a requisition for it."

"Oh, dear, how unfortunate! Couldn't he be put in the back room on the opposite side? You see I keep a register of the rooms—I have, ever since Mrs. Wardell got three rooms, while I was restricted to two."

"Mrs. Wardell is a captain's wife, ma'am."

"Oh, I know that—I am not complaining in the least. No, indeed; I understand military etiquette too well for that. But about this back room——"

"Well, really, I don't think that room is fit to be occupied, ma'am, except in a case of the direst necessity."

"And that happens to be exactly my case. I believe I shall have to beg of you the kindness to let me have it."

"Not for a young lady, ma'am, surely? You would not think of such a thing."

"Oh, no, Mr. Hamilton, not for a young lady," said Mrs. Holcomb, with a sweet smile, "unless you pay me the compliment to class me as such. No, I shall give up my own apartment to Miss Latimer, whom I regard as, in a manner, the representative of her uncle. Being the wife of a humble lieutenant, I have no position to assert; it is my duty to yield precedence to my superiors in rank. If General Latimer were to come here himself (as I have some reason to expect he will, upon his next furlough), we should all of us, you know, vie with each other in seeing that he was suitably accommodated; and upon the same principle we will pay him the compliment of seeing that his niece, his *favorite* niece, has nothing to complain of. Therefore, if you will allow me to occupy the back room on the gallery above Mrs. Lovel, I will send over and have it put in the best order it will admit of. I suppose

I can have a man or two to clean and whitewash it for me?"

"Of course I would have it put in the best order possible; but, really, to go so far away from your own quarters to lodge—to be coming and going in all sorts of weather! It is a thing not to be thought of."

"You see, however, that it *must* be thought of—it is Hobson's choice, as we say," said the lady, with another pleasant smile. "I must go somewhere. Of course, if there were a room to be had in this set, it would be vastly preferable. I do not pretend to be very much of a heroine, and to insist on travelling back and forth in the hot sun, or the rain maybe, to my meals—and in my state of health. The affectation of indifference to such inconveniences would be simply ridiculous. But, since a room nearer home is not to be had, I must show myself the worthy daughter of a brave father. I shall at least be able to let him know that I have endeavored to profit by his example as well as by his precepts."

"Well, ma'am," said the quartermaster, quite touched by such magnanimity, "all I can say is, I heartily wish my quarters were nearer to you—they should be entirely at your service."

"That I have not the slightest doubt of," said Mrs. Holcomb, with one of her most engaging smiles, "and I do not think hard, in the least, of the young officers who are over us, for not making us the same obliging offer. They, of course, are ignorant of all the circumstances of the case—and I could not enlighten them, you know—I could not ask favors, or even counsel, of them, as I could of you. With regard to Lieutenant Tibbets, I freely confess, I think he would be found impracticable. As for Mr. Gaylord, if he happens to have a mother, or a sister, who might possibly be one day situated——"

"I'll tell you what I'll do, ma'am," said the quartermaster, more softened than he cared to show; "I'll step up and broach the subject to Gaylord; and, if I can do no better, I can at least offer him my room, and fit up the one we were speaking of for myself."

And away posted the quartermaster, saying to himself, as he mounted the stairs, "How I have misunderstood that poor lady! How perfectly disinterested she is! How ready to make sacrifices of her own comfort and even her health! How admirable, too, her *esprit du corps!* And how exemplary her appreciation of military duty and etiquette! Anything that we bachelors can do is little enough in the cause of such a woman!"

He knocked at Gaylord's door, and at the loud, sonorous "Come!" he entered, and began to make known his errand. He went through, by way of preliminary, all that had been said of General Latimer and the representativeship, omitting, for the present, the charming and interesting qualities of the young lady in question.

"And do you say there is another room you can give me?" broke in Gaylord, springing up with alacrity. "Then, by George! let's have it—anywhere and any sort of a place. All I ask is, to get away from this —— pow-wow that is carried on under me, about three times a week, to speak moderately."

"Pow-wow?" said the quartermaster, faintly.

"Yes, by George! you never heard such a bedlam-broke-loose as Holcomb and his wife make of it sometimes. I'm often tempted, when it comes pretty near reveillé, to pound upon the floor, to let them know it's time to bury the hatchet; and I would have done it, only that I know the lady would contrive to pay me off in some way that wouldn't be so agreeable, for she's as cunning as—well, cunning enough to compass her ends, whatever they may be, unless

she happens to get hold of you, or old Tib, or one of those timber sort of fellows who are a match for her. But what about this room?"

"If I could make that south back room over in the next set comfortable for you, would you like to exchange?" inquired the quartermaster, who would not for the world have had his companion suspect how near he had been to turning out of his own quarters for the accommodation of the admirable and exemplary Mrs. Holcomb.

"Like it? Yes—jump at the chance. Anything for a quiet life. Can you get it ready for me in a couple of hours? I'll begin to pack up at once; for Holcomb is off on some sort of a lark, and we shall have it hot and heavy when he gets home to-night. So you say madam is going to give up her own room to her father's representative"—here he looked mischievously at the quartermaster—"and take this? Then old Tib will have the benefit of their matrimonial explosions. It will hardly cure him of being a bachelor." And the young lieutenant set gaily to work to fold up his coats and turn out his various little treasures from the drawers of his pine dressing-table, in preparation for packing them in his trunk and transferring them to more peaceful quarters.

The quartermaster walked down the stairs more slowly than he had come up, and, knocking at Mrs. Holcomb's door, said gravely to that lady,—

"Mr. Gaylord will be happy to oblige you, ma'am. He will vacate his quarters within the next two hours."

"Oh, very well—thank you; and another thing, Mr. Hamilton—I should be very glad if you would remind him to have them put in nice order just as quickly as he possibly can, for my cousin—that is, *I* should like to move into them and get settled before my husband returns from the Kakalin."

There were no persuasive smiles now, but a careless nod in reply to the stiff bow of the quartermaster, as he closed the door and marched back to his two friends.

"It's a satisfaction that the room is for her visitor and not for herself," was his consoling reflection.

CHAPTER XVI.

"WELL, Grace, what do you think of that for diplomacy?" said her cousin, triumphantly, as she again joined her.

"You appear to have succeeded; but do you really expect my uncle to visit you?"

"Oh, he may come here—why not? He will have to have a furlough some time or other, and he can as well come here as go anywhere else."

"I seem to be installed as his representative; it will not be thought necessary to fire a salute in my honor, I trust," said Miss Latimer, a little gravely.

"Oh, don't make a fuss about trifles. I had to use a little finesse with that impassive piece of machinery. We've got the room, thank goodness! and now the next thing is to see about furnishing it. But first, as I see you have got your trunks open, we'll take a look at the things. I've been dying to be in the midst of them all the time I was waiting for Stiffy to come back and let me know what I had to depend upon."

Grace took out carefully the different articles of luxury and comfort which a kind and indulgent father had provided for his thoughtless child, and then, opening her pocket-

book, she gave her bills to a considerable amount that he had sent her.

Edith glanced hurriedly over the letter which her cousin had handed her, before laying the dresses, shawls, and trinkets upon the bed.

"Dear papa! He may well say he thinks these things will please me. Why, they are perfectly splendid! Grace, did you choose them, or did he? Only one party dress! Well, I shall have money enough to buy more whenever I like. Oh, Grace, how I shall make Mrs. Wardell and Mrs. Bentley—she's the Colonel's wife—die of envy! Mrs. Lovel don't care about those things. Positively, she goes so plain that when she calls here I often think she isn't paying me much of a compliment. Don't you think it's a mark of respect to wear your best when you go to call on a friend? I shall do better by her; I shall put on that purple silk to-morrow and go and inquire after her health and that of the other ladies."

She went on opening boxes and untying packages, admiring or criticising as her taste directed, till a new idea presented itself.

"Bless me, Grace! I don't believe you've had any dinner. I took a lunch just before you came in, for I put off dinner till Holcomb should get back, perhaps about tea-time. Let me see—what can we give you? There was a nice little piece of prairie-chicken, but I believe I ate the last of it; and as for cake or pie, Norah knows no more about making them than the door-scraper does. It is such a plague to have such ignorant things to deal with! Mrs. Wardell, and Mrs. Lovel, and the rest, always snap up such of the soldiers as can cook, and have them into their kitchens before the poor lieutenants' wives can get a chance. However, I'm even with them. I never invite them to dine or to tea, and I take care to let them know that it is

out of my power, owing to the way in which I am served. Let me see—Norah can run over to the baker's and get a card of gingerbread; and she might step into Mrs. Wardell's and ask her for a pitcher of milk—she keeps a cow, and can let me have some, I dare say. Let me have a quarter of a dollar, won't you, Gracie? The bread-tickets are all out, and that man O'Flaherty would send Norah back without the gingerbread unless she could pay for it on the spot."

"Shall I let Norah have enough to buy you a stock of tickets, too?" asked her cousin.

"Buy bread-tickets! No, indeed. It's Holcomb's business to keep me in bread, if he won't keep me in decent clothes. I told him last evening that I had but two tickets left; and I'm glad you've come, Grace, that you may hear me to-night pay him off for not leaving me money, as I asked him to, before he started this morning."

Grace declined the glass of milk, but made no opposition to the proposal to send for the gingerbread; for, besides being a little hungry, she began to suspect that it was unwise to commence by dispensing with the ordinary comforts of life—Mrs. Holcomb being evidently one who would take an ell if the first inch were peaceably yielded.

"And now about some furniture," said Mrs. Holcomb, as soon as her cousin had dispatched her simple refreshment. "There's the bedstead and the table—they are fixtures in the room. Gaylord can't carry them off; though, if it was to spite *me*, I dare say he'd like to. I suppose that is all there is; and goodness knows," looking around the apartment in which they sat, "there does not seem to be much here that could be spared. The fact is, we buy as little furniture as possible, we have to move so often. From pillar to post, that is the way of it in the army. They say the old Secretary sits there at Washington, and

if he hasn't a war on hand, or something of that kind to occupy him, he busies himself in ordering a new row of buttons on to the uniforms, or a new shape to the fatigue-jackets, or else moves all the companies that are at one fort off to another—if in the dead of winter, so much the better. I shouldn't wonder if, as soon as he hears there's trouble up among the Winnebagoes, he should send us all, women and children, post-haste into the very midst of them. However, that's neither here nor there—you have got to have some bedding," said Mrs. Holcomb, coming back to the point whence she started—"a mattress, in the first place. Ah! I know what we can do. Norah!"

The maid put her head inside the door.

"Norah, tell Conroy to go to the hospital, and give my kind compliments to Dr. Birge, and ask him if he will please lend me a mattress for a few weeks."

"A mattress from the hospital?" exclaimed Grace, quite aghast.

"Oh, you needn't be afraid—Birge knows better than to send me any but a respectable-looking one. He knows that if he did I would have him out of his bed every other night for a fortnight, for some little make-believe complaint or other. That's one good thing in the army—you can pay the doctor off when you have a grudge against him, whatever you may have to put up with from the other officers. Birge will send me the best he has, depend upon it."

"But, even then, do you think it would be quite safe——"

"Oh, if you are so squeamish, I can take it myself, and give you mine. I have been too long in the army to mind trifles. I suppose you would not object to using a wash-bowl and pitcher from the hospital? Mine are both rather the worse for the slight jars which occasionally follow a disagreement of opinion between certain people who shall

be nameless." And Edith laughed heartily, the more so as her cousin's face lengthened.

"Won't you allow me," said the latter, "to send Norah to some store, and supply myself with the few trifling articles I may need in my apartment? I had no idea I was going to put you to so much inconvenience."

"Let me manage, if you please," said her cousin, with an air of dignity. "Having had some experience in garrison life, I can perhaps arrange matters better than an utter stranger. Norah can run to old Madame Pothier's, outside of the fort, and ask her for the loan of a little bed-linen and a few other trifles. She will consider it a great honor to be able to oblige an officer's wife—and I will go there some evening and take tea with her, to pay her for it. Really, I must say Gaylord is wonderfully obliging to have got all his traps out so quick, and Hamilton seems resolved not to be behindhand with him. Did you see the fatigue-party come into the entry and go up-stairs awhile ago? A perfect squad of them! Hamilton understands that he has got to be on the *qui vive* when *my* wishes are in question. It would be a pretty thing if a general's daughter had to wait the convenience of an insignificant lieutenant! Oh, you'll see, Grace, that I know how to have things done. As soon as we see the men going out again with their brooms and whitewash-pails, we will go up and try what we can make of your room."

To while away the time, Mrs. Holcomb invited her cousin again into her sleeping-apartment, where, although the heat was intense, and the room had to be darkened to shut out the fierce rays of the afternoon sun, she busied herself in reinspecting and trying on her numerous presents, deciding which dress she would wear at the first dinner she should be invited to, and which at the next dance that should be given. In this occupation, and the scarcely less

congenial one of inquiring about old acquaintances at the East, or complaining about new acquaintances at the West, the hours slipped rapidly by, until she was suddenly startled by the roll of a drum and a bugle-call.

"My gracious!" she said, dropping the finery, and catching up first one article, then another, with which the carpet was littered, "if there isn't Retreat! I am sure I had no idea it was half so late. The fatigue-party must have gone out without our hearing them, while we were busy talking. Come, Grace, let's go and see what we can make of matters and things up-stairs."

Vehement were the lady's exclamations of surprise at the transformation a few hours had made in an apartment she had expected to find bare and comfortless. Its perfect cleanliness, a few neat Indian mats spread upon the floor, a new mattress upon the bedstead, a red-and-blue table-cover concealing the ink and other stains upon the homely pine table, even a small looking-glass and the proper complement of wash-stand furniture—all showed the thoughtful care of the quartermaster for the newly-arrived guest.

"Upon my word, Grace, Stiffy has outdone himself! He knew what was best, if he expected——"

She stopped suddenly, for, as she turned, the gentleman himself stood at the door of the apartment.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am," he said, as unperturbed as if he had not heard every word the lady had uttered; "may I come in with the carpenter to see the mosquito-frames fitted to the windows? If there is a crack as wide as a pin, the gentlemen will work themselves through it, you are aware."

"Oh, certainly; thank you—how very kind of you! Grace, this is our excellent, obliging quartermaster, who spends his life making us comfortable—Lieutenant Hamilton, Miss Latimer. I am under infinite obligations to you,

sir, I am sure. Really, we married ladies tax your time so severely that you hardly find opportunity to secure to yourself some fair lady of your own."

The officer bowed. "Not at all, ma'am—not by any means."

Miss Latimer moved towards the door, and in passing said, with frank courtesy, "You must allow me to add my acknowledgments to those of my cousin." The lieutenant waved a disclaimer, but looked gratified nevertheless. "And you must call in and become better acquainted with our relative," said the married lady, graciously. "Her news from the civilized world will be a godsend to all us poor exiles." And having acquitted herself handsomely, and cunningly wiped out, as she flattered herself, the impression of her earlier speech, Mrs. Holcomb took her cousin's arm and left the apartment.

CHAPTER XVII.

At an early hour on the following morning every officer who could escape from the ceremony of guard-mounting was on the alert to take boat and hasten in quest of further news from the regions on which was now centred the general interest.

The surest way to this end was, to cross the river to the homely, old-fashioned tavern, where the Governor and his party had established themselves. Having learned all that could there be imparted, the next feasible step would be to proceed up the river a couple of miles to Shanty-town, the most important of the three divisions of the settlement. At this point stood the warehouse of the Fur Company,

and in its immediate neighborhood lived many French and half-breed families, who, from their connection with one or another of the Indian tribes, were always in receipt of intelligence not within reach of the Americans—least of all of the military.

Captain Lytle was one of a party who were loitering on the bank of the river, waiting for a squad of soldiers to get a boat in readiness; and as he had some perplexing thoughts working in his brain, he drew a little apart from his companions and affected to be absorbed in the contemplation of the landscape, which, whether his mind took in the fact or not, presented but two features—the bright, sparkling river, from the clear depths of which the crews of sundry fishing-boats were already drawing their heavily-laden nets—and the long stretch of low, monotonous shore beyond, dotted with occasional clusters of indifferent buildings, some brown and unpainted, others white or parti-colored.

The gallant captain was again to meet the lady of his thoughts, and he had not yet made up his mind what tone his manner should take at the interview. He remembered that his adieu to her on the preceding day had been tender—too much so for him to meet her again with an air of indifference. He felt that it was unbecoming a gentleman to trifle—that the time had passed when he could, with honor, draw back. He did admire Miss McGregor—he admitted thus much to himself—but he rather wished he had not made his admiration quite so evident; for, somehow, it had been observed, and his brother officers, at supper the preceding evening, had quizzed him about it. Then he remembered that Dalton had looked annoyed as the general verdict had assigned to his friend the fair Monica, and this was a triumph only dampened by suddenly observing that Dalton himself was absent, and by

catching the remark from Lieutenant Hamilton, in his slow, dry way,—

"Captain Dalton will be ahead of all of us. He got Nicole, the half-breed, to paddle him across the river in a canoe an hour and a half ago. I wonder if it is to visit the Governor that he is abroad so early?"

"That is what I call a little underhanded," was Captain Lytle's mental comment; "but I flatter myself it will do him no especial good."

The piece of information had the effect, however, of deciding him what course he should pursue. He raised his head from the attitude of troubled reflection, and was about to rejoin his companions, when he observed that an additional animation had been given to their discourse by the approach of a respectable-looking old gentleman of low stature, and dressed, with peculiar neatness, in a summer suit of white jean and straw hat with wide-spreading brim.

The courteous bows and dignified wave of the hand, even had they not been followed by the familiar "Bon-jour, messieurs," and a few further complimentary phrases, would have announced the nationality of the new-comer.

"Ah! here comes Monsieur Pothier," exclaimed one.

"Good-morning, sir! You are very welcome. What news?" cried another.

"What of the Indians? What are they planning to do?" interrupted a third.

"Have all the settlers' families on the Wisconsin and at the Portage been murdered? Are we to be scalped and tomahawked ourselves?" followed from other voices in rapid succession.

"Strange that we have not thought of applying before to you, monsieur, who have so much better sources of information than we can command," said Colonel Bentley, the commanding officer, who now joined the group.

"Eh bien! oui, messieurs," began the old gentleman, then added in broken English, with a bow at the compliment to his resources, "I do know a leetle. My wife descend last night from de Kakalin—she have been dere to veesit her relation, and to take some advice about de matter and ting. *Wish-tay-yan* Le Forgeron* was at de house of her friend. He tell her it all be quiet now, but Four-Legs, de Puan' chief, he never like de American too much—and since his people have be kill up near St. Pierre, he feel pretty *hugly*. Le Forgeron all right—les Foll' Avoines,† dey keep quiet—old Osh-kosh and l'Ours Affreux, him you call Greesly Bear, he all right too. He talk to his young men—tell dem to keep friends wid de 'Méricain always."

"Ah! Old Grizzly Bear! good for him!" cried Captain Lovel. "But how happened it that Holcomb did not bring us this news last night, instead of reporting that he had learned nothing of importance?"

The little Frenchman shrugged his shoulders.

"Perhaps de news cannot be picked up over on de oder side, where de lieutenant friend leeve."

"Ah! I thought so. I doubt whether the party went a foot beyond the Agency, yesterday," muttered the commanding officer. "Are they ever coming with the key of the barge?" he asked.

"It seems Holcomb carried it to his quarters last night, and his memory does not serve him this morning to say what he did with it," was the reply.

One of the officers, more impatient than the rest, walked briskly back to the fort to aid in search of the missing key,

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* The Blacksmith—a Menomonee chief, as were Osh-kosh and Grizzly Bear. Four-Legs was a Winnebago.

† Folles avoines is the wild rice—a name given by the French to the Menomonees, as Puans (polecats) is to the Winnebagoes.

and, seeing that matters were thus for a few minutes at a stand-still, Captain Lytle drew a little apart with M. Pothier, and took occasion to introduce a new topic.

"It would be a good idea, I think, to go up to M. Berthelet's, where the Miss McGregors are, and learn whether any late information has been received by them from the seat of the disturbances."

"The daughters of McGregor—they are then here?"

"Yes. Do you know the family?"

"If I know them? Certainement. I winter on de Mississippi many years ago—McGregor was den my head man—chef. His wife, Espagnole, so beautiful, belle, belle—she was une Puante."

Captain Lytle started. An expression of unconquerable disgust stole over his face—he had not before heard the sobriquet in its fullest repulsiveness.

"One should ask pardon for serving himself wid one such *hugly* name, but it is de fashion of de country from de early time. De Winnebago, dat is, de Ho-tshung-rah brave, do always wear de skin of dat most disagreeable leetle bête on dere war-costume. Wid long familiarité, we do not be so sensible of disgust—we lose de impression."

But not so Captain Lytle. He repeated the name, muttering it between his teeth with a feeling of loathing.

"It is to be regret'," said M. Pothier, apologetically.

"Rather a disadvantage, certainly, to any young lady to whom it may happen to attach," remarked Captain Lytle.

"Oh, for dat, I hardly tink. Dey tell me she has of beauty and education—Miss McGregor. Den her papa can give her so many kegs!" The old gentleman held up his spread fingers.

"Kegs?"

"Eh! certainement—cer-taine-ment! Kegs of dollars

and half-dollars. Noting can be sweeter as de silver, we know. It is de parfume dat please de young so well as de old. It put de shine on many *hugly* ting. And McGregor have of dis nice leetle commodité beyond all count —in his magasin—in his *cave*—in de Bourse at Quebec—at New York. His daught' can buy one husband, two husband, ten husband if she so please."

"Come, Lytle, we are all ready at last. M. Pothier, will you take a seat with us?" cried Captain Lovel.

But the talkative little Frenchman excused himself, not being, as he said, in a toilet to pay his respects to the Governor or the young ladies.

Captain Lytle was obliged to depart, with the particulars he so longed to hear only half told. A portion of that which he had received, however, furnished food for rumination, and the cud of his fancy was less and less bitter the more he masticated it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THEY found the Governor seated on the piazza of the quaint, rambling old tavern, holding, or rather endeavoring to hold, "a talk" with a couple of Indians whose costume and general appearance indicated less familiarity with the traders' "shanty" than did those of the few ill-conditioned Menomonees, or the more respectable-looking Waubanakees, who formed a part of the surrounding group.

The most excited person in the company was the Commissioner, who, at one moment seated, at the next rising to whisper a question or a suggestion to the Governor, the secretary, or even to the wondering natives themselves,

was endeavoring, in vain, to make himself master of the situation.

"Well, Ewing," the Governor was observing, as the military party reached the porch, "I cannot say I make out much of what our friends here wish to communicate. They speak neither Chippewa nor Menomonee, and as Bazin here understands no Winnebago, which is their language, we must look about for an interpreter. Who is there in the settlement that can fill that office for us?"

"Madame Berthelet is a Puan'," suggested Bazin.

"And Miss McGregor, who is at her house, may perhaps know these Indians," added Ewing.

The brow of Captain Lytle contracted into almost a scowl at this remark.

"To Madame Berthelet's, then, let us go," said the Governor. "Judge," to the landlord, "can you let us have some sort of a conveyance? My canoe is yet on board the steamboat, down below."

"Make use of my barge, sir, I beg," said the commanding officer; "and, if you please, allow us to add ourselves to your party. I am quite impatient to learn what these Neechees have to tell, for I confess I do not much like the aspect of affairs."

The offer was accepted, and, beckoning the two strange Indians to follow him, the Governor seated himself in the barge, which, impelled by the stout arms of a crew of soldiers, in a short space of time traversed the three miles to the little settlement of Shanty-town, and landed the party on the dock of the Company's warehouse. A short walk brought them to M. Berthelet's.

It did not enhance Captain Lytle's tranquillity to perceive his friend Dalton just driving from the door with Lieutenant Gaylord, who had obligingly borrowed a horse and calèche from Judge Vedder, the landlord; still less

refreshing was it to think that both were doubtless at this moment chuckling at having thus stolen a march upon him.

Madame Berthelet, though somewhat overawed by a visit from the Governor and the commanding officer of the Fort, yet acquitted herself in welcoming them and their attendants with a grace natural to her mingled French and Indian blood; while the two Winnebagoes, on their part, gave way to the most lively demonstrations of satisfaction at finding, thus unexpectedly, both friends and acquaintances. They poured forth to Miss McGregor a harsh, guttural stream of delighted communication, expressive of their joy that the obstacles to the fulfilment of their mission were now removed.

The young lady ventured a glance at Captain Lytle, to observe the impression this scene made upon him. She detected that his fastidious taste was offended, but she did not allow her composure of manner to be disturbed. With perfect simplicity she presented the two envoys by their French appellations,—

"Le Bras Piqué—Le Tonnerre Jaune"—names which the Governor recognized as conspicuous on the pay-rolls of their nation.

"Yes, yes," he said, with a shake of the hand of each, "Spotted Arm and Yellow Thunder—both heads of villages—I remember them well. Let us all be seated, if you please, and we can then hear what they have got to say."

But what the chiefs had to say was not for the public ear—it was for the Governor alone, and so Miss McGregor was obliged to inform him.

"It will then be necessary for us to retire for awhile, to receive their communication. And I suppose we shall need the services of both these ladies—Madame Berthelet to render the words of these chiefs into French, and Miss McGregor to translate again into English; for although I

do tolerably well in ordinary conversation, it is important that, in a case like this, every word should be given its full significance."

Fortunately for Captain Lytle, no one alluded to the fact that Miss McGregor alone would have been a competent interpreter.

The apartment into which the selected few were ushered was the only other one of suitable dimensions which the modest dwelling could boast—it was the bedroom of Madame Berthelet. It was neatly and tastefully arranged according to the fashion of the country, its otherwise simple furniture being set off by a toilet-table draped with a petticoat of tamboured muslin over one of pink cambric; a counterpane and pillow-cases of patchwork, in which flowers, birds, and butterflies, cut from brilliant chintzes, were fancifully arranged upon a groundwork of white cotton; while a rosary of large black beads, with crucifix attached, symbolizing the presence of a guardian angel, hung upon the bedpost in close proximity to the spot where the head of Madame was wont to repose.

So preoccupied was the Governor that he came near committing a terrible *faux pas* at the outset; for, seeing but one table in the room, and that covered with work-baskets, piles of sewing, and the various other articles which a notable mistress of family keeps ready for her handiwork, he was about, before taking the proffered arm-chair, to lay his light straw hat upon the bed, and thus to offer the direst affront—nay, insult—that can be given in a French frontier *ménage*. As it was no unusual thing at that day for the best bed to form a part of the parlor furniture, scenes of very aggravated feeling, and even action, would sometimes occur in consequence of the thoughtlessness or ignorance of a stranger-guest.

The Governor was saved from a consummation so little

to be desired, by the quickness of Ewing, who, with a swoop, possessed himself of the obnoxious article, while by some happy pleasantry he succeeded in replacing the angry sparkle in the eyes of the hostess by a gracious smile.

The communication of Le Bras Piqué and Le Tonnerre Jaune was to the following effect:—

That, their tribe having learned the intention of Government to hold a treaty with the Menomonees for the purchase of a tract of their country, at which, according to custom, a large quantity of presents would be distributed to clinch the bargain, a portion of the Winnebagoes, for griefs of their own, had banded themselves together in a plan for falling on the whites as soon as they should be assembled at the *Butte des Morts*, the proposed treaty-ground, to massacre them without respect of persons and to appropriate the spoils.

"Are the Winnebagoes, then, so evil disposed? And what are the griefs of which they speak?" asked the Governor.

"Chiefly that which befell their people on the Upper Mississippi, when the crews of the boats carrying stores to the United States troops at the fort above, enticed the wives and sisters and daughters of some of our chief men on board, under pretext of trade, and then hurried away with them up the river—that when, two weeks after, the boats on their way back were visited by the relatives of those who had been so carried away and outraged, the husbands and brothers, in their efforts to rescue them, were themselves attacked and killed—the Government never interfering to punish the murderers. They say, too, that the Big Knives come upon their hunting-grounds and drive away their game, and that they must fence in their country before matters get as bad as they are with their

neighbors the Saukies and Mus-qua-kees, whom the squatters and diggers are intruding on more and more. And finally, the chiefs Kau-ray-mau-nee and Hoo-wau-nee-kah say that now the trouble has begun, and things have already gone so far, it is possible there may be more bloodshed, which they would like to prevent—so they thought it right to send and warn their Father and the Commissioners to turn back, and not come into the Indian country to hold a treaty at this time."

"Things gone so far! What do they mean by that?" inquired the Governor.

The Indians looked at one another, as if undecided what answer to give to the question as interpreted first by Monica and then by Madame Berthelet. After a moment's pause, Le Bras Piqué spoke:—

"Has not a little bird been singing in the ears of our Father and the Big Knives? Have they not been told that white scalps, fresh stripped from the crown, are hanging in the lodges of some of our young men?"

"Tell them I heard, but did not believe, the story. Tell them I did not think the Winnebagoes would be such fools as to tempt punishment from their Great Father the President by such acts. Experience should have taught them the folly of such deeds. In whose lodge do the scalps hang?"

Again the chiefs looked at each other, and the Spotted Arm glanced at Miss McGregor—it was Le Tonnerre Jaune who spoke:—

"The Big Knives say they are in the lodge of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah."

Miss McGregor turned pale as death, but she promptly exclaimed, in a tone of scorn and indignation,—

"In the lodge of the Red Bird? Impossible! impossible!" while Madame Berthelet echoed,—

"Pas vrai! pas vrai! Wau-nig-sootsh-kah? L'Oiseau Rouge? Qui est-ce qui ose l'en accuser?"*

Miss McGregor had clasped her hands as in anguish, and again she cried, "The Red Bird was ever the friend of the white man—he was so called in scorn by his people. He was the bravest of the brave—he could never stoop to be a murderer of the defenceless."

The Spotted Arm gave her rapidly the particulars of the murder of certain members of a family of French settlers in the vicinity of her own home—of the father and a discharged soldier shot and scalped—of an infant scalped and tomahawked—of the wife of the settler wresting the gun from one of the party and escaping unharmed to give the alarm. And these particulars she was obliged to translate to the Governor, as well as to reiterate the desire expressed by the principal chiefs to be recognized as friends to the Big Knives, and to be held clear of any complicity with their misguided brethren.

The Governor listened to all, pondered a few minutes, and then, after commending the friendly spirit and peaceful intentions which had prompted this mission, he said,—

"Tell Kau-ray-mau-nee, and such of the other chiefs as have it at heart to remain friends, to be at the Portage on the fifth day from this. They shall hear from me there, and know my mind. Ewing, I will trouble you to write out, for Le Bras Piqué and Le Tonnerre Jaune, an order for as much tobacco and provisions as they can carry back with them—and then, if you please, see that they set off for the Portage immediately. I suppose there is no danger of their errand transpiring, seeing that nobody in the settlement can understand their language. It is not worth while to throw the whole community into a panic which

* "Not true! not true! The Red Bird? Who dares accuse him of it?"

may be uncalled for: I shall therefore beg the ladies to keep the matter a secret for the present. I shall impart what I have learned to no one but Colonel Bentley; and I recommend to all present to be equally prudent."

The conference over, the Governor and Madame Berthelet returned to the parlor, where they were assailed with anxious questions as to the news brought by the Winnebagoes.

The Governor answered cautiously that they brought messages of friendship and good will from Kau-ray-mau-nee, Little Elk, and others of the principal chiefs, who hoped that if there were any in the tribe disposed to be quarrelsome or mischievous they would soon be brought to a better mind.

"But what about the people at the Portage and on the Wisconsin?"

"They are all safe, as far as I can learn."

"I felt pretty sure it would all turn out a hoax," said Captain Lovel, who, with the exception of Mr. Smithett, had been the most frightened of all the heroes in the garrison. "There is poor M. Rivard insisting on turning right back in the Uncle Sam, to make sure of saving his natty little wig, I suppose. Ha! ha! As if the red-skins had not learned by this time better than to be playing their pranks so near our bayonets! M. Tremblay, you and I can have some comfortable games of euchre together, yet."

As the young secretary entered the little hall on his return from the errand with which he had been charged, the Governor went to meet him, and drew him again into the apartment of Madame Berthelet. Monica was still there, seated in a chair by the window, plunged in gloomy abstraction. The Governor, regardless of her presence, proceeded to give his orders to his secretary.

"I wish you, Frank, to get M. Berthelet to select me the best picked crew of voyageurs for my canoe—they must be men of no common powers of endurance, for I have a long voyage to make and but little time to make it in. They must be furnished with a week's provisions, for there will be no time for cooking or anything of that sort upon the route. Our good landlady, Mrs. Vedder, will pack my mess-basket; fortunately, all things but meat and bread are already in it. You will remain here for to-day, my boy, and see that all things are in perfect order—I do not fear to trust you where voyaging is concerned."

"Do I go with you?"

"No—you will have to stay and keep guard over the goods and silver which are to be distributed at the treaty. I shall recommend to Colonel Babbitt to amuse himself as he can until my return. He will find somebody to victimize, I do not doubt. Have all things made ready, and come down to my quarters this evening, after dark. By-the-by, have a couple of small tents—one for me and Elliot, and another for the men."

"And when do you start, sir?"

"I must be off by daybreak to-morrow morning. People will understand that I go up to Winnebago Lake to talk with Four-Legs, and that possibly I may push across the lake for a conference with Osh-kosh and Grisly Bear. To you and Miss McGregor alone I impart my plan, which is, to hurry on to the Portage, and thence, if necessary, to Prairie du Chien, to look into the matters which are disturbing us."

"To the Prairie? Oh, sir," cried Miss McGregor, earnestly, "would it be possible for you to take me along with you? If I could but go at once! If I could but see him! —that is—I think I could perhaps aid by my counsels—I might do some good——"

"My journey could not possibly be accommodated to the convenience of your tender sex," said the Governor. "I must go like the wind, in swiftness and silence. Even if you could yourself endure the hardships, your young and delicate sister could not."

"Ah! true—Madeleine—yet could she not—but, alas! no—I must not leave her. My father would never forgive me, neither would he if I subjected her to undue fatigue and exposure. Ah! if our boats were only here!"

"I doubt, my dear young lady, whether your interposition would be of any avail. It is to the head chiefs that we must look to regulate these matters. As for the young chief Red Bird, if he be really guilty, counsel to him, as you must perceive, is no longer to be thought of, unless it be a recommendation to surrender himself and submit to the punishment due his crime."

"He is not—he is not guilty! I would stake my life on his innocence. I know his noble character so well!"

"Let him be tried by the laws, then, and prove his innocence. His best friends would counsel him to do that, rather than subject his nation to the horrors which I fear now menace them."

Such were the Governor's concluding words as he again turned to rejoin the party in the parlor.

CHAPTER XIX.

MONICA went directly to her own apartment. She could not, in her present frame of mind, make one of the cheerful circle in the parlor. All thoughts of Captain Lytle and his fastidiousness, or of Captain Dalton and his devotion, were alike put to flight by the news she had heard. She had been flattered by their attentions, she had been proud of what she had imagined her power over them, she had been willing to show to those around her that her lineage and her early associations had no power to detract from the superiority which her natural endowments conferred; but no sentiment of her heart had for a moment been touched, and the present storm of grief and distress swept away even the remembrance of soft speeches and looks of admiration.

She had met with a terrible blow. Red Bird, the friend, the lover of her youth—her ideal of all that was grand and noble—the one to whom she looked to sustain the honor and dignity which were so fast departing from her people, had fallen from his high estate. He was to be hunted and punished as a prowling assassin. She had, it is true, years ago, given up, in obedience to her father's will, all thought of uniting her fate to his. Her mother had counselled her to this sacrifice, and had sustained and comforted her in making it; yet she had never lost the feeling of admiring homage with which she had, from her childhood, regarded one so exalted in character and so amiable in heart. The romance, the passion had not passed away—he was her darling still.

When the visitors had taken their leave, and Madeleine

went to seek her sister, she found her lying on the bed, her face covered from the light—the Indian fashion of brooding over a sorrow.

"Monica! What has happened? Are you ill? Are you in trouble? Won't you speak to me?" she said, tenderly taking her sister's hand. "Oh, Monica!" she shrieked, as a sudden thought flashed across her, "have you had bad news from home? Has anything happened to dear papa? Oh, tell me! tell me!"

"No, no; do not give way in this manner. Nothing is the matter—nothing, at least, to cause *you* trouble. I have heard that some of the Winnebagoes up above are a little restless—a little inclined to be troublesome; that is all."

Miss McGregor arose, and by an effort such as her own people alone know how to command, bathed her face, arranged her hair, and resumed her customary composure of manner. Her sister looked at her, unconvinced by her words.

"Whatever trouble there is among them," she said, "we can do nothing, I suppose. Here we are—powerless."

"Yes, here we are," assented her sister, in an impatient accent, "and here we are likely to be. It is very strange that the boats do not arrive. That paragon, Mr. Logan, seems to be tired of his reputation for promptness and energy!"

"You remember that the next day after we parted with the boats was Sunday. Perhaps the bourgeois did not travel on that day," said Madeleine.

"Not travel? Do you take him for a puritanical New Englander? Do you suppose he set the men down to read tracts and study their catechism? I rather imagine him to be one of those whom they call Scotch-Irish. He has all the look of it; and they are a sort of people not overburdened with scruples of conscience when once they get

out into the wild woods. This unnecessary delay only confirms me in my opinion," said Monica, bitterly.

"Perhaps he was under the impression that we were to remain several days at the Bay, and as the early part of the voyage had been so fatiguing to the men——"

"We can amuse ourselves with any variety of conjectures—it will all amount to the same thing—he is not here at the moment he is wanted. And it will be a very serious matter if he does not arrive to-day."

She said this in so gloomy an accent that Madeleine was more than ever convinced that something was being withheld from her.

"I am sure I hope he will come, then," she replied, earnestly. "Perhaps if he arrives in good season to-morrow it will not make so much difference."

"Perhaps not," said her sister, and she suffered the subject to drop for the present. She seated herself at a window which looked down the river in the direction of the Bay, straining her eyes to discern, if possible, the approach of the longed-for little fleet. Madeleine, knowing that any further offer of sympathy would be annoying rather than consoling, went to a side window which gave a view of the Company's warehouse and its surroundings. The silence of a few minutes was broken by her remark,—

"Why, Mr. Ewing did not go back with the Governor and his party. He is giving presents to those Winnebagoes, I think. The engagés are bringing heaps of things out of the store. Now he is trying to talk with them by signs—they seem to understand his gestures. If they are going directly back, Monica, don't you think they would carry a letter for us, to tell papa we are here? I dare say they could get it carried down the Wisconsin."

A new idea flashed into the mind of Miss McGregor at these words. She started up hastily.

"I will go and see them," she said. Then, catching up her calash and parasol, she added, in a low tone, and as if involuntarily, "I can send a message—what a blessing!" With that she hastened away.

Though the language in which she addressed the two chiefs, when she arrived upon the dock, was a sealed book to Mr. Ewing, he, with prompt delicacy, moved away, and left the young lady to her interview. Her words were brief and emphatic.

"Where now is the Red Bird?"

"At the Barribault."

"Why is he not at Tay-shob-ee-rah,* his home?"

"He has no home at Tay-shob-ee-rah."

"Is he hiding for shame?"

"No; he is not ashamed."

"Does he glory in his deed?"

"No; he is sorry for those who were slain. He says the Frenchman was a good man; it was wrong to kill him and the soldier. He has nothing more to say."

"Did Day-kau-ray and Nau-kaw ask him why he killed them? And what did he answer?"

"He said, 'Ask Wee-kah.'† Day-kau-ray is away on the Mississippi."

"Wee-kah was with him? The meanest and worst Indian in the tribe! Were there but two of them?"

"There were three."

"Who was the third?"

"Wau-nig-sootsh-kah‡ does not tell."

"Nor Wee-kah?"

"Wee-kah never opens his mouth—he answers no questions."

"You will go to the Barribault?"

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* The Four Lakes. † The Sun. ‡ The Red Bird.

"Yes, to deliver the message of our Father to Nau-kaw."

"Then give a message for me to Wau-nig-sootsh-kah. Tell him that in eight days from this I will be at Wau-wau-arn.* He must meet me there. The one that arrives there first will wait for the other. Bid him not fail—here, carry him this as a token."

She tore from her neck a bright-colored ribbon, which she had worn in the form of a scarf. Wrapping it in her pocket-handkerchief, she gave it to "the Spotted Arm," and watched till he had placed it carefully in his smoked-skin pouch.

"Tell him," said she, "it is from Española."

The two savages laughed heartily as she made first one and then the other pronounce the not quite unfamiliar name.

"Spar-rol-yah—very good."

"Will you be at the Portage in three days?"

"Yes, we can walk; or, if we wish, we can get horses at Ma-zhee-gaw-gaw's village, and again at Lake Puckaway."

"Take care of my token, and do not forget my name—Española. And now hurry away; for there is no time to lose."

She shook hands with both, and saw them depart before she turned and again sought her apartment.

Madeleine was still standing by the window where she had left her.

"So you sent papa a certain token that these people had seen you," she said. "I think I could have written a few lines during the time you were talking; but it is all the same—he will hear from us and know that we are safe. I hope you gave him all sorts of tender messages from me too."

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* The Portage.

Her sister murmured some indistinct reply. She would have been unwilling to confess that not one thought of her father, or of the anxiety that he might suffer at the knowledge that hostile savages were upon the path which his children must travel to reach him, had, for a moment, entered her mind.

She could not sit down in her sister's company to meditate, for Madeleine, with her heart so occupied with home and her beloved parent, would be annoying her with questions or remarks to which she would find rejoinder difficult. It would be less of a punishment, she felt, to bestow her company on Madame Berthelet, and to listen to an unceasing stream of *bavardage* which meant nothing, even though it had the Governor, the officers, Le Bras Piqué, and Le Tonnerre Jaune for subjects.

This good lady had, however, but little time to chat, for there were first, the duties of hospitality towards young Mr. Ewing, whom M. Berthelet had invited in to their mid-day meal—next, there was the customary afternoon nap, which could on no ordinary occasion be dispensed with—and lastly, there were guests to receive; for, even before the sun had sunk so low in the western sky as to make a course up the river really comfortable, Mrs. Holcomb had ordered a boat, sent an invitation to the young stranger, Lieutenant Stafford, and, at her cousin's instance, to Mrs. Lovel also, to join them, and, arraying herself in one of her prettiest new dresses, had set out for an excursion up the river to Shanty-town to call on the two fair sisters.

CHAPTER XX.

MADELEINE had much of interest to impart to her friend Grace. All that she had learned of the state of the country through which they were to travel—the visit of the two Winnebago chiefs—her sister's anxiety for the arrival of her father's boats—and her own dread lest there might be, in reality, more imminent danger than Monica seemed willing to admit.

"But you surely will not persevere in going while such a state of things exists!" remonstrated Mr. Stafford.

"I believe we are to set off in a few hours after the boats get here," said Madeleine. "We may, possibly, not meet again after to-day, dear Grace, but I shall only say *au revoir*, for I have your promise to visit me in my own home before you return to the East. The route by the Mississippi will be far easier, and equally pleasant with that by the Lakes; and there can never be long wanting a suitable escort back to New England when once these troubles are over."

Madeleine spoke of "these troubles" with an air of such calm philosophy as quite to surprise her friend.

"What a change has come over her!" she said to herself. "I wonder if it is occasioned simply by familiarity with the thoughts of danger and a sense of the necessity that may arise for entire self-reliance, or whether it is that her sister, now that she is among friends and acquaintances, relaxes somewhat from her rigid guardianship, and gives Madeleine's innocent nature the liberty of a freer expansion!"

Changes had come over others besides Madeleine. Mrs. Holcomb was all graciousness and all hospitality, seeming to incline to establish the younger Miss McGregor as a first favorite. Not since her arrival had her cousin seen her in so cordial a humor. She had, just as her party were leaving the Fort, been proffered the escort of Lieutenant Holcomb himself, who in the course of the preceding twenty-four hours, by some alchemy which Grace could not exactly understand, had become transmuted into "the best-hearted fellow in the world—one who was always on the watch to give his wife pleasure—an escort whom Grace might rely upon, if at any time she felt disposed for a ride on horseback or a picnic at some one of the most frequented places in the neighborhood"—the very names of which made Grace shudder.

During the visit an allusion to out-of-door exercise furnished Mrs. Holcomb an occasion for the following:

"You ride on horseback, of course, Miss McGregor? Then you must come to the garrison, and I will lend you a delightful little animal, that I have just been gallantly presented with. I have not seen her yet, but I am told she is a most exquisite creature. Her name is Lady. Oh, I should be so delighted to see you in the saddle, and to have your opinion of the taste of a certain gentleman!" And she looked beamingly at her husband.

"So it is true that you won Hollister's little mare, yesterday?" said M. Berthelet, abruptly. "Poor Joe! He should stop playing 'poker.' It is not so long since he lost his boat to you."

M. Berthelet, along with a very perfect English accent, had adopted a little of the English bluffness of manner.

"No man should nev' play de poker till he know how," remarked M. Tremblay, sententiously.

"That excellent Joe!" pursued M. Berthelet. "He

will have to travel on his legs after this—he has nothing left to transport himself in."

"Well, I shall win nothing more from him," said Holcomb; "I am going to quit playing. I've quite made up my mind."

"You stop at the safe point," said the old Frenchman, who, upon the whole, was not fond of the military. "Poor Joe! Yes, his good friends may all quit playing—there is nothing left for them to win."

The officer pretended not to hear. He began a series of questions to Mr. Ewing, thus effectually interrupting a conversation which that young gentleman was endeavoring to hold with Miss Latimer, whom he had not before seen since they left the Uncle Sam.

When the visitors were about departing, the ladies were earnest in pressing the sisters to visit them on the following day. But the dinner with Mrs. Lovel, and the evening with Mrs. Holcomb, were alike declined.

"I will do myself the pleasure to call to-morrow, when I go to make a short visit to our old acquaintance Madame Pothier," Miss McGregor said.

"Oh, Madame Puck-y, the best old creature!" cried Mrs. Holcomb; "and such an invaluable neighbor!"

"I have so little time at my disposal," explained Miss McGregor, "it being a matter of the most signal importance that we should be off as soon as possible after our boats arrive."

A few more expressions of regret were civilly offered, when Mrs. Lovel suddenly remembered a piece of information.

"Your friend M. Rivard is still quite lame, Miss Madeleine. The Captain (meaning her husband) saw him at Vedder's, this morning, and the poor old gentleman is so discouraged, first with his accident, and now with these

Indian troubles, that he has given up his journey to the Mississippi, and has determined to return in the Uncle Sam to Detroit."

Madeleine's face lighted up. "Now," said Miss Latimer, interpreting her thought, "you will have a fine opportunity of writing to those dear friends." She looked in vain for the blush and shade of consciousness she had expected. Madeleine's reply was as calm and simple as possible.

"Yes, indeed; I shall most gladly avail myself of it—but I am so sorry for poor M. Rivard! I wonder if I could get some one to drive me down to Judge Vedder's, to take him my letters and messages?" Then, changing the subject, she inquired of her friend, "Have you seen Mr. Smithett since your arrival? I am a little curious to know how he bears a confirmation of these warlike tidings, which he seemed not to relish too well when they were doubtful."

"Poor Mr. Smithett!" said Miss Latimer, with a compassionate smile; "I passed him this morning on the parade-ground, walking by himself in a disconsolate sort of way. I accosted him, and invited him into my cousin's quarters. 'Oh,' said he, in a whipped-schoolboy tone, 'I mustn't go anywhere—I am under arrest; and my limits are just between my own room and the mess-hall, along this side of the square—just where I have to pass in full view of the stocks, and a drunken soldier with his head and arms fastened in it—a most disgusting and unpleasant sight.'"

"Why, what had the poor young man done?" inquired Madeleine.

"The question I naturally asked him. He informed me it was the *not* doing something that had got him into trouble. 'Just because I didn't go and call on the commanding officer,' he said—'reporting for duty, they call it.

I took it for granted that if the colonel wanted anything of me he would send and let me know. How could I suppose that it was etiquette for a stranger coming into a place to make the first call? They never do anything of that kind in New York?"

Madeleine laughed. "Of course you could do nothing but condole with him?"

"Oh, but indeed I did—much more. I went, without a moment's delay, to Captain Lovel, and begged him to take the poor young fellow under his charge and teach him to be an officer. I am afraid I have spoiled the sport of some of his comrades—I have no doubt they were up at the windows of their quarters, amusing themselves at his discomfiture as he was forced to pass the hateful instrument of punishment. They will see him there no more, for Captain Lovel waited on the commanding officer and explained Mr. Smithett to him, whereupon he was released from arrest and put in a way of learning his duties."

Lieutenant Stafford had, throughout the whole visit, been trying to exchange a few further words with the object of his admiration, but Mrs. Holcomb contrived to monopolize him from the moment when her saddle-horse ceased to be a topic of interest. He could only gaze from time to time at the fair, sweet face, framed in its luxuriant golden-brown curls, and wonder, as he compared it with the dark, wizened little visage of Madame Berthelet, whether the two could be of the same race—possibly of the same lineage.

On the whole, the visit, from which the young officer had hoped much, was passing off rather unsatisfactorily. Not so with Lieutenant Holcomb. Having been nettled at the comments of M. Berthelet upon the losses of his good-natured neighbor, Joe Hollister, he had passed the last fifteen minutes in cudgelling his brains for some mode of paying

off the old Frenchman. The result was a sudden address to the young engineer officer :—

"Stafford, when you have finished your survey of the river and the bay, shall you make a map of the tract surrounding your explorations ?"

"I suppose, of course," replied Stafford, a little absently. "Why ?"

"Because I would suggest that no one can better give you the names of all the little localities around here than our friend M. Berthelet—he is, we may say, quite the grandfather of the place. He can introduce you to Hell Creek, and Devil River, and Upper Hog-Rooting—the place we have now the advantage of being in—and Lower Hog-Rooting, where Judge Vedder resides. You perceive that the early settlers were fastidious in their choice of names—doubtless they had a reason."

"Truly the settlers now have," exclaimed M. Berthelet, to whom the place and its belongings were as the very "cockles of his heart"—"a good reason, too. When some of our good friends from the other side come among us to grub round and turn up a little quelqu'-chose to help out the poor little pay their Uncle Sam allows them, the poor, foolish people here call it *rooting*. These visitors root below, they root above ; they turn up maybe a horse, maybe a canoe,—who knows ? We did not ourselves invent the employment, neither bring in the animals that practise it."

M. Berthelet sniffed, and looked around defiantly.

"Come, come, Holcomb, you are too bad !" cried his wife. "What's the use of bringing up disagreeable things? Don't mind him, M. Berthelet—I shall give him a good scolding when I get home." Saying which, she, with much bustle, marshalled Mrs. Lovel and her cousin to the door, and forthwith into the street.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE next day the news was spread abroad that the Governor, with Major Elliot, his elder secretary, and a picked crew of voyageurs, had started in a canoe at early dawn—some said for the villages of the great chiefs Four-Legs and Osh-kosh; some, the Portage; others, the Mississippi.

The whole settlement was, naturally, in a state of excitement and alarm, particularly as, spite of all precautions to insure secrecy, it had transpired that murders had actually been committed at the Prairie, and that the perpetrators of the bloody deeds, who, it was affirmed, were Winnebagoes, had come up the Wisconsin, with the intention of rousing up their brethren to further hostilities.

Boats and canoes were flying up and down the river, while vehicles and pedestrians were rushing to and fro, to a number and with an eagerness never before seen within the memory of man.

Nothing seemed more probable than that these desperadoes should take their way through the Green Bay settlement in their route to the Chippewa country, either to seek allies in their meditated outbreak, or an asylum should the avenger prove too strong for them—for it was to the Chippewas that they would look for aid and fellowship, not to the peaceful Menomonees, with whom Government was about to make a treaty.

Miss McGregor was waited upon with anxious inquiries by the frightened inhabitants.

"She had lived in the immediate neighborhood of these people," they said; "she knew their characteristics; she might even be personally acquainted with the chief actors

in the bloody tragedy. What was her opinion? Would all the Puans show themselves equally savage? Must each settler feel that his scalp was safe only so long as he abode under the protection of the guns of the Fort?"

Then every one had a story to tell, of atrocities in which some friend, or friend's friend, had been the sufferer; and the narration of these was, as a general rule, accompanied by reflections so little complimentary to her red brethren, that Monica had infinite difficulty in preserving her ordinary stoical composure.

Wearied and harassed almost beyond the power of endurance by the stream of visits and questionings, Miss McGregor hailed with joy the hour when the sun had sufficiently declined in the west to make tolerable a passage down to the Fort, and to the dwelling of her friend Madame Pothier.—

She had invited Madeleine to accompany her, but received without comment or objection the excuse of long letters to be written and sent to Quebec by the hand of M. Rivard. The attentions of young officers to her sister being, as she persuaded herself, no longer a thing to be feared, Monica was quite willing to leave Madeleine to the quiet disposal of her own time.

Madame Pothier had nothing new to communicate. She made no allusion to the events which formed the subject of the mission of Le Bras Piqué and Le Tonnerre Jaune. She doubted whether any trouble among the Puans would grow to more serious proportions—her relatives the Menomonees felt no fears. They were very anxious for the holding of the treaty—not that they wished to part with their lands, but since, sooner or later, they would have to be relinquished, it was more convenient that they should themselves have the benefit of the money and goods to be received in payment, rather than that the next generation

should enjoy them. That a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, is a maxim of wisdom probably as tersely expressed in the Menomonee dialect as in our vernacular.

The occupants of the garrison being, equally with the less heroic portion of the community, constantly on the look-out for news, it was soon known that M. Berthelet's boat was at the dock, and by the time Miss McGregor's visit to Madame Pothier was ended, she was provided with the escort of her two rival admirers, as well as of several other officers.

In passing into the fort under the large gate-way which conducted between the guard-houses, she cast one more anxious look over the distant waters of the Bay. All was clear and calm as a Sabbath morning. She heaved a sigh of disappointment, which was almost immediately echoed by a triumphant shout from M. Tremblay,—

"Les voilà! Dere dey come!" And, turning in the direction his finger indicated, she descried, near the opposite shore of the river, the objects of her solicitude. There, indeed, they were!

How rapidly, each as if striving for the goal in a race, were they propelled over the waters! Monica almost fancied she could hear the "whoop-là" of the bourgeois as he encouraged the rowers to put forth their best efforts, that they might bring up in style at their desired haven. Her heart bounded with joy.

"Now we shall be off at once," was her exultant thought. "No more delay—I shall reach him in time! But how provoking that I should not have been there to receive the men—to praise them for their labors and thus encourage them to fresh efforts! Madeleine will never think of such a thing—she will be too much occupied with her letter to her friend Clara, and messages to the darling brother! I must repair the omission and bind the young

bourgeois to my service by showing him how much *I* appreciate, and how confidently *I* rely upon, his services."

All remembrance of the manner in which she had disparaged the young man a few hours before had vanished from her mind; she was alive only to the hope of accomplishing speedily the object she had in view. The future was beginning to wear a brighter aspect. Her contentment of spirit gave an added charm to her manner. She had cheering and comforting words for those who were oppressed with fear—sparkling repartee for the rival aspirants to her favor—gentle courtesies for the hospitable ladies of the garrison, who were tendering her every civility—in short, she so perfectly enchanted the whole circle that Captain Lytle and Captain Dalton felt, each, that he could with the most lively satisfaction hear his friend ordered to take the head of a command and march, incontinent, against the scalping, tomahawking savages beyond the Ma-zhee-gaw-gaw.*

It was nearly dark when Miss McGregor and her trusty squire reached Shanty-town. Tea was waiting for them, and so was Madame Berthelet, with her little budget of what had taken place during their absence.

"Eh b'an! so the boats have come, and now we must lose you. And to think you were not here to see them arrive! So splendid as they came in! Such a fleet of them! And the men looking so nice and merry! The bourgeois himself with the oars at the head—and such a voice as he called, '*Avance! Avance!*' and the men doing their best to keep up with him! oh, superbe, superbe! And the bourgeois such a true gentleman—so comme-il-faut!"

"You have seen the bourgeois, then? Of course, though,

* A formidable swamp on the borders of the Winnebago country.

he would call to pay his respects—that is, to make his report to me. He was disappointed, doubtless, at my absence."

"Oh, for the chagrin, I do not know—me. I only saw him as he passed in at the door. It was your sister who received him, and he stayed a long time—to give the history of his trip, I suppose—some people like so to talk—and Miss Madeleine is so gracious!"

Miss McGregor smiled.

"It was truly gracious in Miss Madeleine," proceeded madame, "to talk with the bourgeois. Not that she advised herself to invite *me* in to hear his account. It might, perhaps, have been no treat to me; I have heard of voyages up from La Marriale before. But I happened to be going through the garden during his visit, and by a little glance in at the open window I could see him sitting and making his report. He was treated with that much of respect that he was not kept standing. I might, if I had been so mean as to listen, have heard every word he was saying—but it would have done me no good, seeing that it was all in English, which is a language I have never troubled myself to learn."

And the hostess, puckering her little, baked-apple face into a self-complacent smile, trotted off to the kitchen, leaving it a point unsettled whether it was by a glance in at the open window that she had ascertained the bourgeois' conversation with Madeleine to have been carried on in English.

"So, Madeleine, you had quite an interview with young Logan, the bourgeois, in my absence?" said her sister, as she gained her apartment, where Madeleine sat at the window which looked off towards the warehouse and dock.

The color mounted in the young girl's face at words which sounded like an accusation.

"Yes," she said, "he was here. Of course his first inquiry was for you."

"His first? His only one, I should think. What could have given him the idea of coming to talk with you? He must understand his place. I did not suspect him of a proneness to take liberties."

"Perhaps he did not think it a liberty, since he had an errand," said Madeleine, with some spirit.

"And what errand, pray, can the bourgeois of the engagés have with *you?* You have never before interested yourself in matters belonging to the boats."

"He came to restore me a letter I had dropped at his camp the day we were at Pottowattamie Island. Perhaps it did not occur to him that he was doing a forward or presuming thing."

"Oh, very well, if that was all; but there is no occasion to act as his defender. I am glad, upon the whole, that you had an opportunity of being civil to him. We shall both have to speak him fair, and the men too, to insure their taking us the rest of our journey in the shortest time possible. Did you tell him how impatiently we had been waiting for the boats?"

"Yes."

"And asked him what kept him?"

"No—for he told me at once that they were not able to come a direct course across the Bay as the steamer did, but were obliged to coast along the shore, which made the distance much greater."

"I hope you have the mosquito-frame in the window—if not, we shall be devoured to-night. I have never known these creatures so tormenting, even on the Wisconsin. At the Fort, the gentlemen and ladies were obliged to keep a currant-bough in each hand to beat them off as they walked."

"If she has brought herself to talk civilly to the bourgeois, that will be a great help," said Monica to herself.

As soon as tea was over, Miss McGregor, escorted by M. Tremblay, walked forth to take a survey of all things animate and inanimate in which her father's, not to say her own, interests were concerned.

The "men's house" was a long, low building, in immediate proximity to the *magasin*, as the warehouse was called. Here the engagés took their meals when on shore —the *hivernants*, or old experienced voyageurs, at a table by themselves—the novices, or *mangeurs de lard*, congregating together in a separate mess.

The men were at this hour seated, enjoying the comfortable fare provided for them, and which was doubly grateful after their protracted rations of corn and tallow, a prescriptive allowance of which composed their unvarying *bouillon*.

Each man rose as he became aware of the presence of his master's daughter; each, with instinctive French politeness, tugged at his forelock and thrust out a foot behind; and each one to whom Miss McGregor addressed some slight word of salutation, prefaced his reply with a deprecatory "Excusez la politesse."

Monica made friends with all, so much so that from more than one was heard the murmur,—

"Ah! if mademoiselle comes among us to be our *bourgeoise*, won't we take off our heads for her?"

All this was in the highest degree satisfactory; it only remained to inspire with the like enthusiasm the clerks, one of whom had the especial command of each boat of the little fleet. These were just now absent. Their toilet made, as old Michaud explained, they had, one and all, walked out for recreation, or to call on some old friend or acquaintance to whom they had been recommended.

The clerks of the Fur Company were, for the most part,

young men of good families of the larger Canadian cities, or from the United States, who were apprenticed to the Company for a term of years—generally till they should reach the age of twenty-one. Each looked forward to the day when he might become a chief clerk, or perhaps, eventually, a partner in the Company; and, buoyed up by such a hope, each was prepared to bear cheerfully whatever hardships might fall to his lot in the ordeal through which it was necessary for him to pass. Whether at the head posts superintending from fifty to a hundred engagés, allotting them their supplies and furnishing them their outfits, or whether assigned to the charge of some trading venture and sent for long months to a distant point, isolated from all society save that of their employés or the savages,—deprived, as it sometimes happened, through failure of transportation or some other unforeseen cause, of all farinaceous food, and compelled to live, the winter through, on fish and maple-sugar alone,—the cheerfulness and energy of spirit with which they first set out sustained them through all vicissitudes, and carried them on, if not to the goal of their hopes, at least to a climax of preparation for making their mark in other spheres of adventure.

One characteristic of these young men has been much remarked by strangers, particularly by foreign travellers—the fact, namely, that, so far from becoming rough and coarse under the exposure and associations incidental to their service, they were, as a class, noticeable for the graceful ease and courtly refinement of their manners. Even at this day we hear it said,—

"What a well-bred man is H, or K, or M!" And then comes the answer, "Certainly; he was brought up in the American Fur Company!"

These young men had, we may remark, one great advantage. The chiefs of the Company who dwelt upon the

frontier were polished gentlemen, and it was with them a matter of conscience to supply to their clerks, at such times as their duties or their leisure brought the latter within the sphere of their influence, the advantages of the homes they had quitted, and to inspire them with an ambition to use every means within their reach for their personal and intellectual culture.

The clerks had occasional vacations at Christmas, or when the winter hunt of the Indians was over; and at such holiday times they were accustomed to repair to the establishment of the nearest prominent trader, where, with a hearty welcome, they were made partakers in whatever recreation was within reach of the secluded circle.

These Indian traders were the aristocracy of the land—a kind of lords of the vast, sparsely-peopled manor, surrounded by their dependants, and receiving the homage alike of white and copper-colored. They gathered around their homes all that was possible of the luxuries and embellishments of civilized life—books and music and refined employments—while the less intellectual sources of domestic comfort, the products of the farm and the garden, the delicacies of the stream, the wood, and the prairie, helped to make up the holiday feasting which was to form a compensation to those whose lot it had not been, for long, weary months, to "fare sumptuously every day."

Oh, the frank, joyous frontier hospitality of fifty years ago! The reality, almost the remembrance of it, has passed away; and what is there in the scrambling, toiling, work-a-day age that has succeeded, to compensate for its loss?

CHAPTER XXII.

As Monica had expected, M. Berthelet brought the young bourgeois to breakfast the next morning. It was a matter of course that he should be invited to a place at the table of the Agent, while overseeing the preparation of the men for the remainder of the voyage.

"Shall we get off this afternoon?" inquired Miss McGregor. "Madame Berthelet has kindly undertaken to have our mess-baskets packed and ready for us by twelve o'clock at furthest."

"I am afraid the men will stand out for their customary holiday," replied Logan. "They have made such unwonted efforts of late, and the weather has been, and continues to be, so intensely hot, that I confess I feel reluctant to push them too far. I doubt if anything will eventually be gained by setting out under a cloud of discontent, or while a part of the crews are incapacitated by the carouse which they regard as their prescriptive right."

"Il faut s'y résigner—peoples mus' be patient," said M. Tremblay, pleased that he should not lose his chance of a new game, which Captain Lovel had promised to teach him on his next visit to the Fort.

Miss McGregor shrugged her shoulders.

"Then to-morrow morning, with the earliest dawn?" asked she.

"I think so," said the bourgeois. "The clerks, with Michaud and myself, and such of the men as will keep sober, will try and have matters in such a state of forwardness to-day that there will be no delay in the morning. Fortunately the weather is so dry and fine that but little

of the loading has been removed from the boats but will be sufficiently protected by the prélarts which have been stretched over them. The arrangement of my own boat so as to insure the comfort of the ladies, is the chief thing we have to occupy ourselves with this forenoon."

This was to M. Tremblay, but it did not escape Miss McGregor that the young bourgeois glanced at her sister as he said it. She was a little annoyed that Madeleine took no notice of what was so civilly said; it was acting too literally, she thought, on her own hint of the evening before.

"My sister and myself are infinitely obliged to you, Mr. Logan," she said, with a gracious air. "You will understand that in a crisis like the present, speed—the utmost celerity possible—is the object that we have most at heart. If we can *only* reach the Portage in a week's time," —she spoke with emphasis—then, recollecting herself, she added, "and from thence to the Prairie, I shall be so happy—we shall be so grateful—my father will not know how to express his thanks. But I will not detain you longer; I feel that every moment is precious."

The bourgeois took his leave, and Miss McGregor admonished her sister of the wisdom of repacking her trunks and baskets at once, before the heat of the day should make such an occupation too laborious.

"Remember, we must put everything that we shall be likely to need during a ten days' trip in our two smallest trunks, for our heavy luggage must go in one of the other boats with the merchandise. Our changes of clothing, books, and work, all must be as compactly disposed as possible; and even then we shall not have too much room."

"My portfolio and writing-desk will take up but little room; and I suppose I can take my guitar?" said Madeleine.

Monica reflected a moment.

"Yes, yes," she said, "by all means take your guitar—anything to——" She did not finish her phrase, and Madeleine hardly knew whether her sister was really becoming more indulgent than she had hitherto shown herself, or whether trouble and anxiety made her forgetful. She could not help observing that she was excited, restless, quite unlike her usual self. Even after her things were packed, and she had placed her thick walking-shoes and large parasol side by side, ready for the following morning, she seemed unable to settle down to any employment.

"Shall you go and call on the Miss Bertrands?" inquired Madeleine.

"No, no; I can go nowhere. Why should I go and call on them?"

"Because you promised them yesterday. Don't you remember?"

"No, I remember nothing, think of nothing, but getting away from here. Oh, if the boats could only have arrived yesterday morning, we should have been on our way by this time!"

"Perhaps it is all for the best. You know we are told that all things shall work together for good."

"Yes, no doubt," said Monica, with a scornful laugh. "If we lose our scalps we can comfort ourselves with the certainty that some young brave will bless the chance that has detained us here."

Her sister looked at her in alarmed wonder.

"I thought you were not afraid, Monica. Do you think, then, we are running such a risk? If so, had we not better wait yet awhile?"

"Wait longer? What an idea! No, I am not afraid. I only used that illustration to show you how vain it might be, in some cases, to trust to your philosophy."

"It is the philosophy of the Bible," said Madeleine, in a low voice. But Monica did not choose to hear. She preferred going to inspect the progress of affairs in Madame Berthelet's department—to suggest sundry little indispensables, which she feared might have been forgotten, as necessary contents of the mess-basket, and to urge the preparation of an abundant supply of all the luxuries, since the bourgeois would make one at their table throughout the voyage.

Madeleine had found means, by the promise of a silver half-dollar, to bribe a little half-breed neighbor of Madame Berthelet's to ride his pony to Navarino with a small package for M. Rivard, containing her letter to her friend Clara and a farewell note to himself. She would have been glad to go to the Fort for a final adieu to Miss Latimer, but, as her sister frowned at the proposal, she let the subject drop.

The bourgeois did not make his appearance at dinner, which Monica accounted for by supposing him occupied with the proper arrangement of the boat in which she and her sister were to travel; and, as she had no further questions to ask, nor suggestions to make, his absence was not a matter of consequence.

"I only hope he did not take Madeleine's silence for pride, and imagine himself *de trop*," she said. "It will be very unfortunate if he happens to take freaks into his head. We must both be particularly courteous and attentive to him. Everything now depends upon him."

The afternoon wore on; the excitement of anxious feeling, added to the oppression of the debilitating heat, giving to both sisters a feeling of languid discomfort.

So far, indeed, were they from cheerful, that they started with something like pleasure at the jubilant announcement of M. Tremblay, who, as usual, was on the *qui vive*.

"Ah! ah! dere come de barge from de Fort—two, tree, four officier. Now my friend Mr. Captain Lovel shall show me his leetle game. And de young officier shall be able to say his adieu to mademoiselle once more."

But the barge did not contain either Captain Lovel or the younger gentlemen. To the surprise of Miss McGregor, Colonel Bentley, accompanied by the two officers next in rank, and the post-adjutant, were ushered into the little parlor.

The errand of the commanding officer was soon explained. Having been apprised of the arrival of the boats destined for the Mississippi, he had thought it incumbent upon him to take information of the nature of the supplies about to be transported in them through the Indian country. Confirmation had been brought to him of what he had already suspected, namely, that fire-arms, powder, even whiskey, formed a part, and no inconsiderable one, of the cargoes. As the hazard would be imminent of the whole venture falling into the hands of the excited and already hostile savages, who were doubtless perfectly well apprised of the intended advent of the boats, and would be on the lookout to take possession of them, Colonel Bentley had decided, as a military precaution, to lay an interdict upon the departure of the little fleet, at least until the return of the Governor should assure him that tranquillity was restored.

This announcement fell like a thunder-bolt upon Miss McGregor. She had esteemed the detention of a single day an affliction almost too great to be borne—now she was about to be chained for two, perhaps three, weeks in an inaction which might prove most calamitous.

For a moment she sat as if paralyzed, her face assuming so ghastly an expression of woe that Madame Berthelet, who had not taken in the sense of the commanding officer's

communication, was absolutely terrified, and murmured, in soft accents of astonishment,—

"Tsha-ko-zhah, Mau-nee-kah nee-grah?"*

Miss McGregor, with a supreme effort, subdued her emotion.

"The officers do not, perhaps, recollect," she said, in the sweetest, blandest tones she could assume, "that I am of the same blood as the people whose depredations they fear—that both chiefs and young men would sooner go on the war-path, trusting only to their own bows and arrows, than to touch ammunition or aught else that had been placed in *my* charge, and belonging to one whom they look up to with such veneration as they do the Yellow-Head, my father."

"No, you say rightly, madame, the officers do not recollect that," said Colonel Bentley, with a laugh which he intended should soften the unpalatableness of his persistence. "They are alive only to a fact which all experience proves—that the Indians, when once their blood is up, are very apt to forget the ties of relationship, and help themselves to whatever is necessary to carry out their diabolical schemes. You, my dear young lady, may be their very good cousin in the times of treaties, and payments, and distributions of all the good things that Uncle Sam provides for his red children; but I fear that, as with the crowned heads across the water, the *entente cordiale* of our native monarchs is reserved for occasions when it can bring neither loss nor inconvenience."

Miss McGregor struggled to suppress her rising feelings. She knew that it was politic to manifest no irritation at this reply; she therefore continued with as much calmness as she could command,—

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* What is it, little Monica?

"I can assure you, sir, I know well the person whose hostility you probably most dread. I was brought up in relations of the most intimate friendship with him." Her voice lost a trifle of its steadiness as she said this. "Indeed you are mistaken if you suppose that there is danger from him more than from the older chiefs of the tribe."

"You must pardon me, Miss McGregor, for expressing my hope that you will neither now nor at any other time be compelled to trust your safety to the tender friendship of the bloodthirsty young chief to whom you doubtless allude—the Red Bird. I could not answer it to my own conscience—I could not answer to your respectable father—if I suffered you to pursue the mad scheme of throwing yourself and your interesting young sister into the very jaws of destruction."

"Then you are determined to detain us here for the present?" asked Miss McGregor, piteously.

"I must assuredly do so. I sent up a messenger this forenoon to the person who has charge of the boats—the *bourgeois*, as you call him—to apprise him of the resolution I had taken. He came down to wait upon me, and, in your interest, I suppose, argued the point well in his endeavor to move me. A fine young fellow he seems to be; but in a matter of duty one must not listen to persuasions. If it were not so, your wishes, my dear young lady, would be all that could be required."

"And what," said Miss McGregor, who could not quite control the flashing of her eye, "what if, upon reflection, I do not consider myself restrained by your prohibition, but resolve to prosecute my journey?"

"If I believed such a measure meditated, I should be under the necessity of sending a detachment of soldiers to superintend the transfer of the cargoes of the boats to M.

Berthelet's warehouse, and to set a guard over the whole establishment till the time of the Governor's return."

He spoke so resolutely that Miss McGregor deemed it wisest to pursue her opposition no further. She merely said,—

"I shall not subject you, sir, to any such trouble. Your soldiers may, possibly, be needed for other duties. My sister and I will submit to what you are pleased to call a military necessity, and strive to render ourselves as harmless and insignificant as two solitary, helpless maidens may."

The leave-taking of the commanding officer after this sally was rather distant and formal—it was met with a degree of hauteur on the part of Miss McGregor. M. Tremblay, between his fear of offending the young ladies and his dread of losing the hospitalities of the garrison, was in a pitiable state of perplexity, now bowing with French politeness to the military officials, now stiffening himself into an attitude of dignity as he caught the glance of reproof which was directed towards him by the young lady.

"You shall please tell Captain Lovel," he began, "noting in particular, I tank you"—such was his parting message to his euchre-playing friend.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"Do not wait tea for me, if you please—I am going for a walk," said Miss McGregor to Madame Berthelet, as, arrayed in hat and scarf, she, soon after the departure of the officers, passed out at the front door.

M. Tremblay bustled forward to offer his escort, but the

young lady repelled him. Madeleine understood at a glance that she wished to be alone. It was her custom when anything troubled her.

She was a little surprised, however, to see her, instead of choosing the path along the river-bank, turn into an unfamiliar street, or rather lane, at right angles to the high-road, and leading over a range of elevated ground which the inhabitants dignified with the name of hill. On this rising ground had formerly been reared some military works, and it was still known as Camp Smith. Whether from a certain peculiarity of soil, or from some other cause, it was proverbially the place most exposed to thunderbolts of any in the whole country. Tradition reported many lives suddenly cut short within its precincts; and perhaps it was for this reason that few and scattered were the humble dwellings which broke the uniformity of the umbrageous magnificence which covered its summit.

Into one of its vistas, which was, in fact, hardly more than a pathway, Monica turned, and plunged into recesses which the timorous citizens of the place would have fancied peopled at this moment with savage enemies.

But Miss McGregor knew no fear. Her heart was swelling with anger and disappointment, and she only longed for solitude and an undisturbed communion with her own thoughts. She seated herself upon a fallen tree—it was scathed and shattered by the same force that had prostrated it.

"Like my hopes!" she said; "like everything I set my heart upon—torn, and blasted, and cast to the earth!"

She had no time, however, for lamentations; she must rouse herself, and ponder what, in this new emergency, was to be done. The Red Bird, whom she had summoned to meet her at the Portage—what would be the effect of this delay upon him? Would he come at her bidding, and,

not finding her at the appointed place, would he seek her elsewhere, and in so doing betray himself to those who would treacherously give information and seal his destruction? There were always around trading-houses, such as that at the Portage, hangers-on, mean spirits who, by feigned words, were ready to make merchandise even of their fellow-creatures. And Wau-nig-sootsh-kah was now a marked man. There could be no doubt that the Governor's visit to the scene of action was a precursor of some demand for atonement, by the Winnebago nation, for the past outrages. Would they, to save their country from an incursion of armed white men, deliver up to an ignominious death their noble young chief? And had she, by the message she had sent him, perhaps lured him on to his fate? Was it even possible that while she was chained here by the cruel, senseless order of the commanding officer, the one whom she would have died to save was being entrapped, and about to suffer in expiation of the guilt of another? For Monica did not for a moment admit the idea that the Red Bird had imbrued his hands in blood. She felt certain of hearing from his own lips that the hand of his companion—not of Wee-kah, but of him whose name was said to be unknown—had drawn the trigger and sent the bullet through the heart of that poor soldier, the victim who fell by the side of the ill-fated Gagnier.

To learn the name of this savage, to denounce him and thus to save her friend, had been the scheme upon which Monica's heart had been set, for the accomplishment of which all her plans had been formed.

Her determination thus suddenly thwarted, what might be the result? She trembled as she contemplated the consequences which were, to say the least, possible. The chiefs of the tribe intimidated—the Red Bird given up in compliance with their pusillanimous counsels! And

there was now no help; none, at least, unless she could send a second, a warning message to the young brave.

Long she sat and pondered, turning over in her mind scheme after scheme, yet rejecting each successively.

One moment she resolved to order a bark canoe, with a crew of expert and trusty voyageurs, and, departing by stealth, hurry up the long, tortuous Fox River to Lake Puckaway, whence, by means of an Indian pony, she could be transported in a few hours to the Portage, reaching it before the Governor could possibly thread the long loop of seventy miles which was the measure of the river passage thither.

But no—she must not thus desert her young sister. Her father would never forgive her should she leave Madeleine to the care of comparative strangers, and subjected to influences against which she had solemnly promised to guard her.

"Ever thus!" she said, gloomily. "Always that favored one to be thrust between me and the accomplishment of my dearest wishes! Alas! it is to be so, doubtless, even unto the end!"

After a short season of bitter thought, she resumed her cogitations in regard to what was before her. Since to go herself was out of the question, would it not be possible to dispatch a trusty messenger? But who would do her errand? The engagés, with old Michaud at their head, would follow her lead, even into the heart of the enemy's country; but as well expect the canoe to move forward without the impulse of its paddles, as an employé to show prowess except at the signal of his bourgeois. Ah! the bourgeois! Would Logan undertake this errand for her? Could he, a stranger to the country and language, hope to reach the Barribault hills, and, searching from village to village, find Wau-nig-sootsh-kah and concert with him

all that would be indispensable for securing his safety? It was not to be thought of.

The idea next suggested itself that a Menomonee might be the most reliable person to take charge of her mission. The two tribes were in alliance—living in such close proximity, there was a sufficient familiarity with each other's customs and language to make intercourse a matter of no difficulty. But where to find a trusty messenger? Certainly the squalid, drunken members of the tribe whom she daily saw lounging around the dock or lying along the roadside were not the persons to be safely selected as envoys in a matter so delicate.

There were, however, she doubted not, to be found men who did not haunt the settlements—men who retained their primitive integrity and sobriety: such a one she must seek; but it was not in the neighborhood of Shanty-town that her perquisition must be made. She must go to the Kakalin—a place resorted to, as she well knew, by the Menomonee chiefs who had relatives among the half-breed families in that vicinity. Madame Pothier, who was of the same stock, would accompany her, and smooth the way for the carrying out of her design. It would but be necessary, she was convinced, to hint at her solicitude for the safety of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, her cousin, to secure the hearty concurrence of the good-natured little métive.

To-morrow, then, at the earliest hour possible, she would go to visit Madame Pothier, and together they would concert measures for prompt and efficient action. Such was Miss McGregor's final decision; and, having arrived at it, she rose from the log upon which she had been seated.

Through her long-protracted musings all sounds around her, even the plaintive chaunt of the whippoorwill from his adjacent covert, had fallen upon ears that heeded not; but

with her first return to consciousness of outward things she was startled and admonished of the lateness of the hour by the hooting of an owl, as it flew from its dark perch in the thicket behind her. She shuddered involuntarily at the omen—it was not a happy one for the success of her undertaking.

"If it should be in vain!" she exclaimed. "If he should never receive my warning—never know how Española has labored to save him! Oh! Wau-nig-sootsh-kah! you have called me cold and unloving—I will show you that I am neither; though to regard you as I did in those by-gone, happy days would be now a sin perilling my eternal salvation."

She wrung her hands as she stood—she could not repress one wild burst of sorrow, but, leaning her head against a tree, she sobbed aloud. Having given way for a few moments, she collected herself with one of those efforts to which she had so long been accustomed; and, her composure being in a measure restored, she walked slowly out of the wood and proceeded towards the Berthelet abode.

Her thoughts, in turning from the one great subject of solicitude, were not altogether tranquil as they rested upon another. She would gladly have retracted some portion of her dialogue with the commanding officer. She blamed herself for the defiant, sarcastic tone of her concluding remarks to him.

"Colonel Bentley might, if matters came to the worst, have had it in his power to befriend the Red Bird," she said. "Now I have made him my enemy, and put it out of my own power, in any case, to ask his interposition. Oh, why had I not more self-control? Why, with such power over my emotions when only trifles are concerned, did I show myself weak and petulant when the case was,

possibly, one of life and death? But my error must be repaired, if, to that end, I stoop my pride as Española never stooped before."

CHAPTER XXIV.

As she drew near the house, Monica heard the sound of music, and soon distinguished her sister's voice accompanied by her guitar. Madeleine was seated upon the little porch of the mansion with the older members of the family, who had come forth partly to enjoy the fresh evening breeze after the oppressive heat of the day, partly attracted by the sweet song of the young girl.

They were not the only listeners.

Leaning upon the fence which separated the grass-plat in front of the house from the little, quiet street, Miss McGregor's quick eye had detected the tall figure of the young bourgeois, notwithstanding the deep shadow thrown over him by a spreading elm under which he had stationed himself. Two days ago she would have hastened forward and summarily put a stop to her sister's recreation; now she arrested her own steps until the air which Madeleine was singing should be finished. She was willing that the impression it was producing upon the young man should be deepened rather than effaced.

"He is fond of music," she murmured to herself. "So much the better! It will come in aid of the little scheme I have in view. And what harm can happen to her? Her heart is well guarded—of that there can be no doubt."

What disastrous effect her "little scheme" might have upon the young man himself, she did not trouble herself to consider.

After a few minutes she opened the gate and joined the little circle.

Madeleine instinctively laid aside her instrument. To her surprise, her sister placed it again in her hands.

"Sing me the little Scotch song that seems such a favorite with you lately—'Wandering Willie,'" she said.

Madeleine struck the chords, but she did not immediately begin the air; she went preluding on, until her sister remarked,—

"It is perfectly simple, and you sing it often. What is the matter?"

"Yes, it is simple," said Madeleine, and she began the air; but when she had gone through one verse she stopped.

"I think there are other melodies which Monsieur and Madame Berthelet will prefer," she said. And with some animation she struck up the air of a gay little French chanson.

Miss McGregor cared not for the change—she had gained all she wanted. "She cannot sing it—it brings to mind her own Wandering Willie too forcibly. It seems that, for once, 'absence' does not 'conquer love'! So much the better for my purpose."

The song finished, the guitar was again laid aside, and but a few minutes elapsed before young Logan entered the front gate. Madame Berthelet politely made room for him, and was offering him a seat on the porch, but Miss McGregor interposed.

"You have come to talk over this vexatious business," she said. "Let us go into the parlor. M. Berthelet, I shall want you, also, at the council. I can discuss matters calmly now, though, a few hours since, I could not."

The strength and bitterness of her tone surprised Madeleine, who knew of no reason why the detention of the boats should thus afflict her sister.

"She has said that she has no fear of the Winnebagoes—it cannot then be that she is anxious to rush through their country before they get to be still more hostile. And it cannot be that she is more impatient to see papa than I am—at least I think not. It must be that anxiety in regard to the boats and their cargoes weighs upon her, for poor, good M. Tremblay is not an efficient aid, that is certain. And yet she has not the whole charge——"

Here Madeleine's thoughts wandered off in another direction, till recalled by the animated tones of the respectable M. Tremblay's voice, as he was holding forth to Madame Berthelet upon the "grand chagrin" of being thus detained for an indefinite period from the numerous olive-branches round about his table, and from their youthful step-mother.

"Comb' est-ce que vous avez des enfans?"* inquired Madame Berthelet, in the patois that by courtesy was called French.

"Oh, I have nine—that is, I think—no, ten. Let me see. Jérôme, and Napoléon, and Victoire, and Alexandre—those three we named so in the time of the great war. Some said, You should call one of your boys Wellington—he is the biggest captain; but I said, No, he is English, and I don't much love the English—me. Victoire, and Jérôme, and Napoléon, and Alexandre, three"—counting on his fingers—"then Josette and Geneviève, two twins—that makes how many?" M. Tremblay was never quick at reckoning.

"Six," suggested Madame.

"Yes, six—then next come Paul, and Jérôme——"

"But you have counted Jérôme," interposed Madame.

"Eh well—yes, he is the oldest of all—then we will leave him out. There was Paul, and, let me see—was

* How many children have you?

there not one that died?" The honest gentleman knit his brows and thrust out his under-lip in his effort to remember. "Oh, yes; certainly, certainly—there *was* a little fellow, and he was very young when he was born, and we named him Labette—oh, then he must have been a girl—yes, he was a girl, Labette, Lisbeth—oh, I remember that little baby very well. And, and—how many have you there, madame?" observing that the good lady was keeping conscientious tally.

"I have only eight."

"Well, there are some more. Jérôme, and Paul, and Jean Baptiste—he is a twin, too, along with his sister Archange—they were the little ones when their mother died. That baby Labette that was too young to live, he came in somewhere before or behind little Paul, I remember now so well! Have you counted them all, madame?"

"N'goatau-shee-wee-shee-mar-chee!"* exclaimed the good lady, holding up one hand, and with her head on one side, giving utterance, in an admiring, sing-song tone, to the customary feminine ejaculation of astonishment among the Indians†—"Dix enfans, puis un de mort! Saint Baptême! et nous autres n'avons 'ien qu'deux!"‡

"Yes, madame, ten children; and my pretty wife, though not their own mother, is so good! Believe me, she never pinches them, never pulls their hair; she is truly an angel, except only"—after a pause of reflection—"except to my poor sister Thérèse, whom I brought home to me when I lost that other poor wife. My dear Domitile does not, indeed, to my poor Thérèse show too much patience; but what will you have? We cannot be perfect. And Thérèse,

* Oh! most wonderful!

† Singularly enough, the expressions of wonder and admiration used by the two sexes are unlike.

‡ Ten children, and one dead! Holy baptism! and we have but two!

she bears it well. She takes care of the children, only that Jérôme and Napoléon and Alexandre are grown, and in the Company as clerks, and Victoire and Josette and Geneviève are with the ladies at Rock Island—and the little Archange is with her respectable grandmamma—and all the rest that excellent Thérèse cares for—and she lays the table, too, and keeps the house in order, and concerns herself that Madame shall have no trouble, for she knows I like a quiet house."

The result of the conference in the parlor was made known by Miss McGregor's address to M. Tremblay, on the return of the party to the porch.

"I have determined, monsieur," she said, "to go up to the Kakalin to-morrow morning, and try if I can find means to communicate to my father the senseless order by which we are detained. He will naturally suffer great anxiety on our account, another of the prudent precautions of the military being, I understand, to send no mails through the country while this state of disturbance continues. We must find our own couriers, it seems. I doubt not of being able to do so, if I take matters in hand myself. Silver will command the necessary services, if friendship will not."

"Then I can write to papa," cried Madeleine, joyfully. "I had better do so at once."

"There will be time enough in the morning," said her sister. "You will have a couple of hours or more while I am gone to beg Madame Pothier to accompany me to the Kakalin."

"Mademoiselle Madeleine will have to content herself for the day, I suppose, with the company of an old lady like me; it will not be very amusing!" said Madame Berthelet, greatly put out that Madame Pothier should be chosen rather than herself for Miss McGregor's companion.

"No, my sister will go with us," was Miss McGregor's

quiet answer. "We will stop for her on our return from the Fort. And we shall leave Monsieur Tremblay behind. You will, I am sure, monsieur, give any aid or counsel to M. Berthelet that he may require in having the lading of the boats carefully transferred to the *magasin*. After this season of hot weather we may expect storms; and no part of the cargoes must be left exposed. Mr. Logan will take charge of us to the Kakalin, and bring us back to-morrow evening."

It was now M. Berthelet's turn to feel offended. He had a profound contempt for his friend Tremblay, and did not in the least relish the offer of his aid or counsel. He sniffed and tossed up his high French nose, as was his custom when things did not please him, and replied,—

"I think Tremblay had better give his help and advice to Captain Lovel and that polite young man who is Joe Hollister's friend. The nine clerks and Philip Berthelet can superintend the transfer of a few cargoes without troubling him to act as bourgeois. If he likes to spend his holiday at the garrison, we will furnish him with a conveyance there"—a hint which greatly pleased his simple-hearted guest, who bowed and smiled his satisfaction.

"I had reckoned, however," said Madame Berthelet, stiffly, "that at least Monsieur Tremblay would have remained to help us dispose of some of the provisions of which we have so uselessly provided a great store for Miss Monica's journey to the Portage."

"You had better give us a good basketful, madame, in our boat to-morrow morning," said the young lady, blandly. "Although I am in hopes to be able to return in the cool of the evening to-morrow, yet it is possible I may not accomplish my errand before the day after, and, as I cannot trespass upon the hospitality of Madame Pothier's friends with our whole party, I shall be greatly obliged if you will

let your good Françoise pack us up a ham, with plenty of biscuits, ground coffee, and sugar, with any other little, palatable thing that may be convenient—so that we can have our table provided in tolerable comfort, in case of an enforced detention."

This was all the balm to her wounded feelings which Madame's observation elicited.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE young bourgeois was astir with the dawn on the following morning, that he might have all things in proper train for the expedition to the Kakalin.

A fine spacious canoe was first selected from among those kept constantly ready for use in the *hangar* in which the weightier and bulkier of the Company's goods were stored. A couple of engagés, aided by a Menomonee hanger-on of the establiishment, were presently engaged with a little kettle of melted gum, paying each seam anew, and scrutinizing with watchful care lest some minute crack or point by which water could find entrance might have escaped their observation. These preparations completed, the canoe was lifted without effort, so light was it notwithstanding its size, and placed in its watery bed. Next was heard the sonorous call of old Michaud,—"'Faut crier le butin, puis l'entrer!"* and away trotted the engagés, first to the men's house, whence they brought a store of mats, cushions, and umbrellas, which the bourgeois had provided for the comfort of the ladies; next, to the kitchen of

* You must get the baggage and put it in the boat.

Madame Berthelet for the *vivres*, or provisions, which that excellent lady, with ostentatious resignation, had caused to be packed in superabundant quantity for the refreshment of her guests and their chosen companion. Having laid up this good deed to the credit side of her account with conscience, Madame Berthelet felt at liberty to lay a light rein on the neck of the old Adam which had been, since the evening before, threatening to break loose.

Early as was the hour when the sisters descended to breakfast, they found their hostess seated before a little table, on which were strewed bits of birch-bark cut into shapes—porcupine-quills of varied and brilliant colors—beads and worsteds—pieces of smoked deer-skin—fragments of blue and scarlet shrouding—all the appliances, in short, which might vindicate her title to be considered as thoroughly a *sauvagesse** as the one who had been preferred before her.

Here she worked with great dignity at a small *mocock*, tracing landscapes upon the bark and plying her little pincers with diligence until she had formed a remarkable green horse prancing under the shade of a spray of brick-colored roses. Her whole air said, "I am exceedingly ill used, but I shall not give people the triumph of seeing that I mind it." So having with unwonted politeness of tone requested Françoise, her little half-breed maiden, to summon the gentlemen from the dock, whither they had gone to take a survey of the preparations which were in progress, she proceeded, in lofty silence, to pour out the coffee and dispense the other articles of good cheer with which her table abounded.

Young Logan made his appearance equipped for the expedition in dark-gray linen trousers and a toga, as it was

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* The French name for an Indian woman.

called—a sort of frock of green French chintz, the belt of which, buckled tight around his waist, showed to advantage its symmetrical contour. The heat and exercise of the morning had given an additional glow to his face, and slightly moistened the brown locks that clustered around his fair and well-shaped forehead. Miss McGregor was a little startled as she took in the *tout ensemble* at a glance.

"Upon my word," she said to herself, "I did not think he was so handsome. What if there should be danger? But no—there cannot be. Madeleine is her father's daughter; she, at least, has all the pride of the McGregors. And yet"—here she glanced again at the young man, "it is well, perhaps, that she has a double panoply."

She stole a look at her sister. Madeleine's eyes were bent upon her cup of coffee, which she was quietly stirring. She seemed occupied with anything rather than the looks of the young man. When she raised her eyes it was to address some pleasant little remark to Madame Berthelet, whose gloom she made sundry efforts to dispel. Not once did she glance towards the bourgeois. Even when her sister called her attention with, "Madeleine, Mr. Logan is offering you some butter," she gave the slightest possible inclination of her head, and turned again towards the pensively-majestic old lady.

"She is even more proud than I thought her," said Monica to herself. "If he perceives and resents it, it will be unfortunate for my little scheme. Distance of manner may, however, stimulate rather than repel him. Hauteur sometimes has that effect."

The bourgeois, in the mean time, took his breakfast quietly, without saying or looking aught that could be construed into an ambition for notice from either of the ladies.

"I have written a few lines to my friend Miss Latimer,

to explain why I cannot call on her to-day. Will you be so good, monsieur," said Madeleine to M. Tremblay, "as to be the bearer of my note?"

Miss McGregor fancied that young Logan made a movement forward, as if with the intention of offering his services; but before her sister's sentence was finished he had turned away, with the remark,—

"The canoe is all in readiness; and as," looking at his watch, "it is not yet seven o'clock, I think, if we set off at once, we shall be back, and well on our way to the Kakalin, before the heat of the day becomes oppressive."

"Taking much trouble, to go four miles in the hot sun this morning, just to find a companion on a voyage!" remarked Madame Berthelet, with emphasis, and in her very best French.

"Rather a trouble, but one must resign oneself to what is unavoidable," replied Miss McGregor—which did not help the matter.

She departed, and Madeleine went up-stairs to write her letter to her father. She had much to communicate, for it was long since she had written him. Expecting to be the bearer of her own news, there had seemed little occasion, even if there had been opportunity, of giving him the particulars of her welfare. Now, there was so much to tell, so much to compress into a small space—for Monica had warned her that her letter must be short. She studied the most concise phrases, and rewrote certain portions more than once. Before she had thought it possible for the voyagers to accomplish their trip, she heard her own name pronounced, and was aware that the bourgeois had entered the little hall below and was summoning her to join the party in the canoe. Her letter was quickly sealed, and she had only to snatch her broad-brimmed leghorn hat, her parasol, and small satchel—then she was

ready; and with a light step, and heart lighter still, she tripped down-stairs, and, taking leave of Madame Berthelet, accompanied the young man to the little platform in close contiguity to the dock, against which the canoe was swaying in the morning breeze.

It was a lovely morning. The sun's rays were occasionally veiled by the light clouds which, like waves of pearl, now gathered over his disk, anon parted and let down his beams upon the sparkling waters; yet, though the heat of the day was thus tempered, the bourgeois had, with his usual forethought, provided a fresh crew to take the place of those who had already been upon duty.

Madeleine, as she approached bright and smiling, had a pleasant word for each. To the old bowsman's gratification, she began questioning him, as soon as she had paid her respects to Madame Pothier.

"Eh! Michaud—we are not to have a very long trip, doubtless, with our brave voyageurs here? It is not far to the Kakalin?"

"Oh! du tout, ma genti' demoiselle—'ienqu' trois pipes, je crais, d'icite au Kakalin."*

"Three pipes! Oh, Michaud, you will have to make it four—yes, five pipes, this hot morning." She spoke in French, then added the inquiry in English,—

"About twenty-one miles, is it *not?*" with the customary colonial inflection. The question was to the bourgeois—it was the first word Monica had heard her sister address to him, and the change in the expression of his face and the animated tone of his voice did not escape her, as he replied,—

"I think it is about that distance to the foot of the rapids,

* Not at all, my pretty young lady—only three pipes, I believe, from here to the Kakalin.

and I agree with you that the pipes will have to be tolerably frequent, if the sun's rays continue to pour down as they do at this moment. Allons, nos gens! Arrche'! arrache'! pousse' au large!"

The young man's clear, sonorous voice gave the word of command, the paddles, as if by magic, fell in concert, and the light, graceful canoe shot away into the broad waters. A few strokes sufficed to place the little bark in her prescribed course towards the south, and then spontaneously broke forth the cheering carol from the lips of the proud and gay-tempered Michaud, who led the strain,—

"Il y a un fils de Prince,
Qui se lève au point du jour."

As the other voyageurs echoed the refrain, the bourgeois first and then the ladies caught the air, and paid the delighted crew the compliment of joining the sweet, quaint chorus,—

"Dorme, ma belle, passe le jour,
Dorme, ma belle, il n'est point du jour."

The bourgeois had seated himself towards the stern of the canoe, yet sufficiently near the ladies to answer any question that they might be pleased to address to him. He proffered no remark, and certainly seemed in no danger of incurring the charge of forwardness which Miss McGregor had, at one time, suspected he might deserve.

In the cramped position to which the narrow dimensions of the canoe subjected the ladies, an occasional change of arrangement was necessary to insure their comfort. The mats and the cushions had drawn forth animated expressions of commendation from Madeleine, but in one of the first pauses in the song of the crew she suggested an improvement.

"Those great bags of skin near you, Mr. Logan—what are they?"

"We call them *porches*," was the quiet reply.

"Oh, I do not mean the name, but what do they contain?"

"A couple of small tents, in case we should be overtaken by a shower before we could reach a place of shelter."

"Oh, delightful! I almost wish it would rain. It is so long since I have been in a tent! Wouldn't you like to have a shower by-and-by, Monica?"

Miss McGregor could not say that she would, for she remembered that she might, possibly, have a long walk to take after their arrival at the Kakalin—that it might even be necessary for her to make her way into the neighboring forests in search of a messenger to the Portage; all that she had been able to learn from Madame Pothier having been, that there were almost always lodges of Menomonees within a few miles of the mill and settlements around the rapids.

She, however, graciously commended the thoughtful care of the young bourgeois, and even smiled indulgently at Madeleine's next suggestion,—

"Don't you think, Mr. Logan, that by placing these porches, as you call them, nearer the centre of the canoe, and piling our cushions upon them, we could make quite a nice little divan to sit upon, instead of being crouched down here upon the bottom of the canoe?"

"The only objection to that would be that the canoe would presently lose its balance, and we should all be in the water," said the bourgeois.

"True—I had forgotten that; I will be very quiet, and not put the company in jeopardy." And the young girl, in full contentment, set herself to listen quietly, not to the confabulation of the other two ladies, which, being carried

on in Chippewa, she could not understand—but rather to the pleasant poetic narrative that Michaud was giving, with the chorus of,—

"En roulant ma boule, roulant,
En roulant ma boule."

At the proper interval the melodious strains were interrupted by the bourgeois' startling shout of,—"Whoop-là! pour la pipe, pour la pipe, nos gens!" when the prow of the canoe was turned towards the shore and run in under a grassy bank covered with lofty trees—a lovely spot for the half-hour's respite which the toil of the voyageurs demanded.

"Ah! by-the-by, Mr. Logan," said Miss McGregor, with sudden recollection of a point on which she had resolved to satisfy herself, "will you please tell me what countryman you are? Are you a Canadian?"

"I call myself a Canadian," he replied, "although I was born in the north of Ireland. My family, however, claim to be of Scottish descent."

Monica cast a triumphant glance at Madeleine, yet her accent was more than usually courteous to the young man as she replied,—

"You combine, then, the elements of the finest character in the world—energetic impulsiveness with cautious determination. Ah! I see we shall do extremely well, sir, under your care. We shall go like the wind, yet keep out of all danger and disaster."

And with these words she gave him her hand that he might help her on shore.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE voyageurs had assuredly paddled with a will—for, after a few pipes, and long before the sun had reached the meridian, the shout sounded loud and clear over the rippling waters,—"Arrache', arrache', nos gens!* pour le Kakalin!" and with vigorous strokes the canoe was sent gliding forward till it touched the gravelly margin of the little bay which put in at the foot of that long, broken descent of the Fox River known as the Kakalin, or Rapids.

It was impossible, without rudeness, to refuse the pressing invitation of Madame Pothier to walk up to the house of her friend Madame Godefroy, for at least a short call. A visitor from "the East" was such a godsend in those remote, secluded regions, that a failure to afford the good people an opportunity of hearing, seeing, questioning, and admiring would have been an injury not soon forgotten.

Monica, though somewhat preoccupied, bore her part in the civilities with tolerable patience; but it was only Madeleine who could enter fully into the benevolent satisfaction of describing, narrating, and replying to the many questions of the younger members of the household, the gay French element of whose character predominated over the philosophical indifference which was also a part of their inheritance. But, though Madeleine chatted and laughed, she did not quite lose the thread of her sister's conversation with the elders.

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* Pull away, my men. The voyageurs generally give the word of command with the verb in the singular and the pronoun in the plural.

The answers which Miss McGregor received to her inquiries were encouraging beyond what she had dared to hope.

"Yes, doubtless a messenger could be found. Le Forgeron* might be at the Kakalin that very day. He had appointed to come with news from 'up above'—people were beginning to look out for news now. Then there was Le Loup—Moa-way—at his camp on the other side of the woods."

"Moa-way? He must a Chippewa. That would be excellent, for I understand the Chippewa language, though not the Menomonee," said Miss McGregor. "But what can a Sauteur† be doing in this neighborhood?"

"He is not a *Sauteur*—he is a *Courte-Oreille*‡—he married the daughter of Le Forgeron—of course he has come to live near her people."

"Ah! that indeed. And where shall I find him?" asked the young lady.

"We will send little Pierre to guide you to his lodge—it is not more than a mile distant. But, as the day is hot, and you have come so far, would it not be better that you should remain with us and let Pierre bring Moa-way to you here?"

"By no means," was Miss McGregor's earnest reply, for she did not forget that there might be others besides herself who understood the Chippewa—a language familiar with most of the Indian tribes.

The two young daughters of the house eagerly pressed Madeleine to remain with them, but Madeleine, having also a particular reason for wishing to see the messenger, resolutely declined the invitation, with, however, the inquiry,—

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* The Blacksmith. † A Chippewa. ‡ An Ottawa.

"Is it certain that we shall find Moa-way at his lodge?"

And the answer was entirely satisfactory:—

"He must be there. What else should he be doing in the heat of the day, when there is neither game nor fish to be taken?"

Miss McGregor was hardly prepared, as yet, to go the length of asking the escort of the bourgeois to the camp of the Ottawa, but she with alacrity availed herself of a suggestion contained in an inquiry of her sister,—

"Are you sure it is quite safe? Is there no danger?"

"Of the Puans? Oh, not the least—just yet, I imagine."

"No, not of the Puans, but of copperheads, rattlesnakes——"

"Des siffleurs! serpens de sonnettes? Not in the least. It is only at the Portage that they have such beasts."

"Nevertheless," said Miss McGregor, "we will be on the safe side, and ask Mr. Logan to give us his escort. I would insist on Madame Pothier's remaining behind, for I fear she must be exhausted with heat and fatigue, only that it is possible we may fail of finding Moa-way, in which case I should very much desire her kind services to interpret my errand to some one of the Folles Avoines."*

Madame had not the slightest desire to be left behind. She had her own little spice of curiosity; and having, with the quick observation of her people, divined that Monica had an object in view far more weighty than merely dispatching letters to her papa, or even than taking information about her cousin the Red Bird, she was resolved to lose no chance of arriving at the secret.

The bourgeois came in obedience to the summons of little Pierre, and, attended by him, the three ladies set forth on their walk. The two Miss Godefroys would have been

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* Menomonees.

delighted to add their company, but it was no part of Miss McGregor's plan to invite them. She was only afraid that Madeleine, always so polite and attentive to the comfort of others, should take it into her head to do so.

Monica had her own ideas in offering her arm to Madame Pothier and walking on in advance, leaving her sister and the young bourgeois to follow at their leisure. It was not, truth to tell, the surest way of being warned of danger ahead; but for that Miss McGregor seemed willing to trust to little Pierre. Now and then she looked back, and had the satisfaction of observing that the young man was permitted to carry the parasol, and that he was assiduous in holding aside projecting branches, or raising a too dependent bough that threatened to obstruct her sister's path.

Once, as she turned her head suddenly, she thought the proximity of the two closer than the occasion required, and it seemed to her that Madeleine's color was considerably heightened; but whether that was from displeasure at what she regarded as a familiarity, or whether it was merely caused by the heat and exercise, she could not determine.

"After all, it is evident that he has been bred with a knowledge of what is right and proper; he will not begin, at this early day, to startle her by overstepping the bounds of a respectful reserve. Madeleine will doubtless treat him with politeness. She knows that we are to be, in a measure, thrown upon his kind offices until we are safe under our father's roof. If he is prudent and she is not ungracious—as it certainly is not in her nature to be—I think I may count on a power of moving him at my will. Matters seem going on favorably."

With that she looked back no more, but left things to take their course.

Their devious, briery path at length led them out of the forest and into a little glade at the head of the rapids, on which were scattered three or four Menomonee lodges. The usual surroundings of ashes, refuse, and half-clothed children, took from what might otherwise have been picturesque in the scene.

A half-dozen of small, wolfish-looking dogs yelped a salutation, whether of welcome or defiance was to be determined by circumstances. Out of consideration for Madame Pothier, Madeleine endeavored to subdue all expression of distaste, but she held herself aloof while the other two ladies approached the inmates of the lodges. After the first hearty "Bon-jour! bon-jour!" Miss McGregor opened her errand with,—

"Ton-a-pee Moa-way?" (Where is the Wolf?)

"Moa-way was-saw!" (The Wolf is far away.)

"Gone! oh, that is very vexatious!" and Miss McGregor's brow clouded almost into a frown.

"When will he be back?" was her next inquiry, in Chippewa, which is likewise, with slight variation, the language of the Ottawas and Pottowattamies.

"Pah-nee-mah," (By-and-by). And the spokeswoman raised her hand to a point high up in the southwest, to indicate the probable time.

"Ah! very well," said the young lady, brightening up; "when he returns, tell him to come over near the mill——"

But though the wife of the Ottawa had picked up the few words of her husband's tongue most in use, she could not comprehend a longer message, even when assisted by Miss McGregor's comprehensive gestures. Madame Pothier was about to be called in aid, when she was again interrupted by a suggestion from Madeleine,—

"Why not wait, in one of the pleasant recesses of the wood, till Moa-way returns? We passed several, just

upon the bank of the river, where it looks beautifully cool and shady. Couldn't we send little Pierre to ask some of the men to bring us the lunch-basket? I don't quite like to confess it, but I'm terribly hungry."

"A very excellent thought," said her sister, complaisantly. "Certainly far better than waiting for Moa-way down by the noisy mill." And Pierre was accordingly dispatched to Michaud for the lunch-basket.

Whether her sister had vouchsafed a word to the bourgeois during their walk, Monica could not determine; she certainly neither spoke to him nor looked at him now. To make him amends for this seeming disdain, Miss McGregor graciously commissioned him to select the spot best fitted for their temporary sojourn and repast; and she took pains to address several questions and remarks to him, even condescending to walk with him a little way towards the wood, giving him her ideas of the sort of little glade most desirable—"upon the bank of the river, and at a comfortable distance from the Menomonee lodges."

If this condescension were meant as a reproof to her sister, it failed of any visible effect. Madeleine remained quietly seated on the trunk of a fallen tree, selecting from a collection of bright summer flowers in her hand the large, variegated forget-me-nots which grow in such luxuriance in that region. These she formed into a bouquet, and bound together with some tendrils of the wild clematis, also a part of her treasures—the rest she discarded.

Monica observed it all, and believed that she understood the feelings which kept her sister silent, yet which spread such a soft, contented glow over her face.

"The forget-me-not is memory, of course," she said, mentally, "and the clematis—is that hope?—Hope and memory? *She* has both to live upon, while I, alas! have neither."

Bitter, envious thoughts filled her breast and prompted the questions, "Why should one sister be so much more blest in her lot than the other? Why should the one have everything to make her glad, and the other nothing?"

Then she remembered that Madeleine, too, was separated from the object of her affections.

"True," she said, "but the separation will be but temporary. Malcolm's father will relent—will accord his son full forgiveness—will write to his old friend demanding his daughter in marriage. Madeleine evidently foresees a happy future. It is this certainty that gives a cheerfulness to her spirit, a lustre to her eye, and a bloom to her cheek. Her heart's young affections, even if crushed for a time, can never be so by the ruthless fiat of her father! Not for her is reserved the agony of knowing that but for the tyranny of a parent she might have been the instrument of saving one most noble, most beloved, from a pagan's life, a pagan's death!"

Miss McGregor could scarcely refrain from wringing her hands in anguish at the picture she thus conjured up. She did restrain herself, however; yet she brooded all the more darkly over the contrast, and questioned more and more rebelliously the justice which permitted it.

"What has Madeleine done to make her the favored of Heaven?" was her further thought. "Has she been a more dutiful daughter than I? Has she striven more earnestly to do her duty to God? Has she even labored as assiduously as I, from my earliest years, have done to win the heathen to Holy Mother Church? Would she, to soothe the last lingering hours of an unhappy parent, have listened to her prayers and have given up all that I gave up without an outward murmur? Let Madeleine be put to the test—yet, ah! that can never be—circumstances can by no possibility arise to try her as I have been tried—

unless——" Here her musings took a darker hue. Delay and disappointment were working havoc in the better feelings of Monica's nature.

"Why should *she* be exempt? Why should she not be tried as well as I? Let Madeleine be put to the test! But how? Suppose there has been, after all, no thought of love between the son of my father's friend and herself. Suppose young Lindsay left his home for some cause of disagreement with his father in which she had no part. Suppose Madeleine is at this moment heart-free, as she certainly looks and appears. Then there might possibly arise circumstances which would give her an opportunity of showing how strong her sense of duty is—how cheerfully she can obey the behests of her father."

Miss McGregor was fast drifting from the principle on which she had at first intrenched herself. She had said at the outset that she would only avail herself of her sister's influence over the bourgeois to expedite her own meeting with Wau-nig-sootsh-kah. Now she began to speculate on the consequences to Madeleine herself of this daily association, this dependence for courtesies, and eventually, perhaps, for protection, upon one endowed by nature to a degree that might well prove attractive to a disengaged heart.

From the moment that she caught the young man's glance of admiration at her sister at the Pottowattamie Islands, she had taken it for granted that Logan would not be able to withstand the charm of daily companionship with one so lovely.

At that early day she had foreseen great inconvenience from any such susceptibility on his part, but she had consoled herself by repeating, from time to time, "Madeleine is proud—she is her father's own daughter!"

Now her only fear was that her sister should prove *too*

much of a McGregor—that she should discourage and dishearten the young man by scorn or neglect.

Should she not, however—should the long voyage do for both the one and the other all that a voyage under such circumstances well might do, then let the father have proof which of his daughters was the more dutiful—which the more deserving of his love and favor!

Such was the termination of Miss McGregor's self-communings.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MADAME POTHIER, half dozing from the combined influence of the warm summer air and an abstinence since five o'clock in the morning, and the young ladies, absorbed in their reveries, were not sorry to be aroused by the approach of the bourgeois to conduct them to the place he had prepared for their refection.

It was a sequestered, sylvan spot, with openings which afforded glimpses of the bright, rippling waters as they babbled past. Logan had placed a little tent and spread mats and cushions, that the period of awaiting the arrival of Moa-way might be passed with as little discomfort as possible.

The good things provided by Madame Berthelet were discussed with great satisfaction, Miss McGregor insisting on the bourgeois' taking a seat within the circle, and otherwise showing an evident desire to make him one with themselves—a change of policy which Madeleine did not understand, and for which, like many other of Monica's proceedings, she did not pretend to account. As for the young man, he seemed not disposed to avail himself too

lightly of her invitations—a backwardness which Miss McGregor attributed to her sister's reserve of manner.

"How perverse Madeleine is!" she said to herself. "She surely need not hesitate to be civil when I think it worth while to be so. Such pride is simply ridiculous; and, unfortunately, it may become something worse than ridiculous!"

No one showed a disposition to talk but Madame Pothier, and her *bavardage* was suddenly brought to a close by a shout, not loud, but cheerful, of, "How! how!" followed by the still more joyous "Bon-jour, bon-jour, mes amis!" in an accent quite superior to the ordinary French *patois*, as a tall, stalwart Indian bounded rather than walked into the circle, and, with cordial hand-shakings to each, testified his satisfaction at the rencounter.

"Bon-jour, bonjour! C'est Moa-way, le Loup?" said Miss McGregor, in a tone of interrogation, for the singular costume, half civilized, half savage, and the language in which the salutations of the new-comer was given, rather mystified her.

Moa-way, for he it was, was clad in the inevitable deer-skin leggings and moccasins, but his shirt was of white cotton cloth, instead of the customary *indienne* or bright-colored calico. It was worn in the ordinary Indian fashion, outside of the leggings, and was of unusual length, hanging quite below the extremest verge of an old-fashioned blue frock-coat bedizened with tarnished gold lace and buttons. The shirt was, moreover, ornamented with a broad double frill in front, and its snowy whiteness showed that it was a garment reserved for state occasions; while the shining countenance, free from paint, announced that Moa-way had complimented the strangers by a fresh toilet as much in their own taste as he could compass.

There was something so jolly in his manner, so cordial

in his phrases of welcome, that the little reserve of Madeleine's manner thawed away at once, and she was almost as ready as the other two ladies to put forth questions and listen for answers.

"So, Moa-way—you are welcome back!" was Miss McGregor's next address. "Have you been *up there?*"

"To Wau-wau-arn (the Portage)? No—only across the lake to the village of L'Ours Affreux."

"Ah! good old Grizzly Bear! And what does he say of these times? What does he think will happen?" Miss McGregor affected to speak lightly.

"L'Ours Affreux knows by this time that our Great Father, the Governor, has gone into the country. We met him half across the Lac des Puans at daylight this morning."

"Does he think we shall have trouble? Does he suppose the Puans will go to war?" asked Madame Pothier.

"He knows that Day-kau-ray, and Nau-kau, and Hoo-wau-nee-kah are wise men, and that they will say to one another, Our Great Father has come from a fort full of Big Knives—he is going, fleeter than the wind, to another fort full of the same."

"From which you gather," said Miss McGregor, "that the Winnebago chiefs feel themselves to be hemmed in on all sides."

"There is no more a road through their country," responded Moa-way, "without coming to a fence which bars the way."

"That is true," said Miss McGregor, in an accent of profound sadness—"no road save that which leads to the grave. What do the Folles-Avoines chiefs say of the—the accident which happened at Tee-pee-sau-kie?"*

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* Prairie du Chien.

"They know that it happened," said the Ottawa, sententiously.

"Do any of their people know by whom the deed was done?"

"There were three of the party—the Red Bird, the Sun, and another one."

"And the other was——"

"The Red Bird does not say."

"All singing the same song! But the Red Bird *must* —his Great Father will insist that the Red Bird *shall*— make it known!"

"Or else——" said Moa-way, slowly.

"Or else what?" asked Miss McGregor, almost fiercely.

"Who knows?" said Le Loup, with that shrug so peculiar to a Frenchman that neither Madeleine nor the bourgeois could repress a slight exclamation.

Miss McGregor remained plunged in thought, and her sister took up the word. She had not fully comprehended the conversation that had been going on—she little suspected that it referred to a brutal murder; but she saw that Monica was distressed, and she sought to change the topic.

"But, Moa-way, if you are an Ottawa, as they tell me, how comes it that you speak such good French?"

"Oh, I learned it when I was young," said Moa-way, with a grand air. "I was civilized once."

"Ah! Is it possible? How was it, and where?"

"It was Father Sylvan who took me. My father was killed in Wayne's wars, and I was left a little boy with only my sister; and the good priest found us and took us home, and took care of us, and gave us education."

"And did you learn to read and write?"

"Oh, yes. Father Sylvan taught me reading, and writing, and religion, and several other things. But

when I grew older, I liked better to go back to my people. I got tired of staying always in the house, so I went back——"

"And left your sister?"

"Oh, a girl is different! They took her, you see, and sent her to the Ladies;* then, afterwards, she married a trader. She was contented."

"And do you remember what you learned with Father Sylvan?"

"Not plenty—only to talk."

"Don't you remember your prayers, Moa-way?" asked the young girl.

"Not too much. You see," said the Ottawa, apologetically, "they were in a different kind of French, which I did not understand, so they have all gone from me except here and there a word—'*seclorum, seclarum, seclorum,*'" he repeated, with a tolerably devout air, "I remember that—it means, I've been a bad boy, and I'm going to try to be better."

"And you have no opportunity of going to church now, I suppose?"

"Oh, pardon! When I go down to Po-chee-quet† or to the Michilimackinac to the payment, I sometimes go near the little church, when I see the people going in and I stand awhile at the door to hear the priest sing, and I say over my seclorum, seclorum. Then when the father goes round and sprinkles with his little brush, I bow and thank him—not that I let him see me, though, for if I did he'd have me up there and give me more to learn—so I wipe my face and come away."

Moa-way laughed roguishly, and Madeleine could hardly preserve a grave countenance; but Miss McGregor, re-

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* Professed nuns who teach. † Green Bay.

garding the Indian's tone as irreverent, thought it best to make a diversion by offering him some refreshment.

"Pee-quay-zhee-gun!" he exclaimed, forgetting his French in his satisfaction at seeing a plate of biscuits pressed upon him.

He took them every one, in true Indian style, with the expressive "Nish-ish-in!" (good)—yet, tempting as they undoubtedly were, he put them quietly by his side and made no motion towards eating them before the conference should be ended.

"Do you speak English?" Mr. Logan took the liberty of inquiring when a lull ensued in the conversation.

"Talk Eenglish leetle," Moa-way replied, slowly, with an air of self-complacency. "Leetle boy D'troit—play Eenglish, talk Eenglish." And with his hand he designated the height of a boy of nine or ten, to signify the period of his life when a smattering of English was likewise among his accomplishments.

"But, Moa-way," continued Madeleine, "tell us now, sincerely, what do you think of these Indian troubles? What are the Winnebagoes going to do? Are they really determined to act in an unfriendly manner?"

Her voice and expression were so pleading that Moa-way, spite of his characteristic reticence, could not resist her. He looked her full in the face with a solemn air—then, placing his hands horizontally side by side, and pressing his forefingers closely the one against the other, the Indian gesture to signify an intimate friendly alliance, he said,—

"Good Indian, *so!*" Then, with a sudden turn, "God-d—n Indian, *so!*" and quick as thought he had drawn his knife from its sheath, and with a glittering whirl described a circle around an imaginary scalp, clutched in his left hand.

With a shriek of terror, Madeleine sprang from her seat, only to find herself locked tight in the protecting arms of the young bourgeois, who had thrown himself forward at this demonstration, and who, during the moment that she clung to him, was soothing her with the tenderest accents.

It was but a second before recollection came, and the young man relieved his embarrassment by turning with frowning brow to the Ottawa as he remarked,—

"Upon my word, my friend, it would be better not to enact these frightful atrocities in play—they are not amusing to the ladies."

Moa-way looked a little abashed. He laughed, however, and proffered his hand to Madeleine, whose paleness from fright had been speedily succeeded by burning blushes.

"No—no—talk Eenglish no more—no good!" to which he added a repetition of the profane expletive by which he signalized his acquaintance with the language, and presently suffered himself to be beckoned away by Miss McGregor, that he might receive the commission with which she had to charge him, and which it was of such vital importance to her that he should fulfil faithfully and promptly.

Madame Pothier had no excuse for offering to join them in their conference, but she could not resist the temptation of strolling in the direction they had taken, and peering at the two from a distance. All that she could find out, however, was, that a small canvas bag, containing, she was certain, several dollars of silver, was the present guerdon of the service required; and she had no difficulty in interpreting the gestures which guaranteed another and larger sum when the errand should have been faithfully accomplished.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SLOWLY and wearily to Miss McGregor passed the days which succeeded the departure of Moa-way to the Barribault.

There was little social intercourse now among the inhabitants of the settlement—only flying visits from one locality to another, to learn the latest news or to repeat the latest tale of horrors. Rumors had begun to be rife of evil having befallen the Governor and his party—of his canoe having been attacked in going down the Wisconsin, and a part of his crew murdered. It will be easily believed that, in such a position of affairs, formal tea-parties were rare and merry-makings unknown.

Captain Lytle, impelled perhaps by a sense of his duty to Government, or possibly actuated by considerations of what he owed to his family and himself, had taken Lieutenant Stafford and his other *subs* and gone down the Bay on an exploring tour, leaving his friend Dalton to make his way with the fair Monica. Whether this movement betokened a growing indifference, or whether it argued a settled understanding with the lady, was a matter of speculation in certain quarters.

The story brought by Spotted Arm and Yellow Thunder had by this time become generally known. That Waunig-sootsh-kah, the brave and beautiful young Winnebago chief, had been the leader in such atrocities, those acquainted in the nation found it difficult to credit.

The Red Bird! The friend of the whites! The wise and peaceful and kindly young chief! Rather any Indian in the tribe than he! Such was the universal verdict. Yet when it was told upon what was claimed to be indis-

putable authority that immediately on the return of the Governor the proposed treaty would be held at Butte des Morts, all the military, with arms and even artillery, being present—and that the Winnebago chiefs who should venture upon the ground were to be told, "You must either surrender the Red Bird and his accomplices, to be dealt with according to our laws, or prepare to stand your ground between the troops marching upon you from this side, and a still larger force at this moment ascending the Mississippi and Wisconsin on the other"—then it was conceded that there could no longer be reasonable doubt of the truth of the rumors.

And all these speculations—all the contumely heaped upon the Red Bird—Miss McGregor was forced to listen to. It was almost more than she could bear. She would sometimes try to draw off her thoughts from the painful subject, by watching the progress and effect of the increasing intimacy into which her sister and the bourgeois were thrown.

For a time they met only at meals, and then the young man's demeanor was so reserved, so respectful, that it seemed absolutely necessary to lend a helping hand to the affair if anything was to be accomplished by means of Madeleine's power over him. So Monica would plan visits to the Fort, for her sister, under the nominal escort of M. Tremblay, and, as she would recommend that they should be made in the cool of the afternoon, she found it no difficult matter to add to the arrangement the suggestion,—

"Perhaps Mr. Logan will go along with you, in case Monsieur should wish to stay and take supper and a game of euchre with Captain Lovel or M. Pothier." Occasionally she would confide a shawl or some sort of wrapping to the bourgeois, with the careless remark,—

"You will not forget, if you please, to hand it to my sister if the evening grows chilly or damp. My father would be dissatisfied if she suffered any exposure; and good M. Tremblay's memory is not the most prompt."

She could fancy to herself the care with which her sister would be enveloped and shielded from the air; for, in spite of his habitual reticence, the time had come when there could be no longer any doubt that Logan had fallen as deeply into the snare she had laid for him as her purposes required.

If her conscience sometimes gave her a twinge, she would be ready with her sophistry,—

"If they choose to be unwise and fall in love with each other, can I help it? It is certainly no fault of mine that we have been detained here so long and the opportunity afforded them. I do not see, however, that Madeleine is likely to give cause for uneasiness. She knows her own value; she is every inch a McGregor. But suppose it were otherwise—suppose my father should be dissatisfied—and suppose he should refuse, as he unquestionably would do, to listen to the young man's prayers—she would suffer, of course; and she would have to bear it. I have been through the same trial, and who has cared for *my* sufferings?"

On the eighth day her heart was gladdened by Moaway's return, and though the answer he brought was somewhat equivocal, she accepted it as consoling, for it appointed an interview at a designated spot upon their route to the Portage, "when the darkness should vanish and the daylight shine again."

Such was the Red Bird's message; and his token was a little embroidered scapulary which Monica, in happier days, had tied around his neck, as a symbol of the faith she had labored in vain to teach him.

The message and its accompanying memento softened Monica's heart, for a time, towards her gentle and unoffending sister, and she had almost resolved to interfere and arrest the mischief she was preparing for her; but then her former argument returned—"Unless I secure the bourgeois by an irresistible influence, how can I be certain of his compliance with my suggestions as to speed or delay, as the exigencies of the task I have in hand may require? For, after all, he is in one sense the master. He has never been placed under my control; if he chooses to go ahead with the boats I have no power to hinder him, neither have I to spur him forward faster than he thinks best to go."

Thus it was that things were permitted to take their course.

At length, when three weeks had elapsed without any well-authenticated tidings of the Governor—when no Indian runner could give a hint of his whereabouts—when all eyes were strained daily and hourly in the direction of the Kakalin and the Portage to watch for his coming—suddenly a shout announced, one morning, the approach of a canoe, paddled by Canadian voyageurs, from the direction of the Bay and Lake Michigan.

A flag was flying at its stern, indicating the approach of some dignitary; and, to the astonishment of every one, the Governor and his suite were presently descried, while the whoop of Major Elliott, which those who once heard it never could forget, confirmed the identity and the safety of the party. Shouts of salutation and welcome, as they approached, were ringing through the air.

The voyage of a thousand miles, up the Fox River, down the Wisconsin and Mississippi to St. Louis, thence through the Illinois River to Chicago, and along the coasts of Lake Michigan and Green Bay, had been made, thanks

to the brawny arms of the sturdy voyageurs, in little more than three weeks.*

No one had been killed, no one harmed; all were safe and well, and ready to act with promptness in preparation for the treaty which had been long delayed, but must now take place.

"The Governor has come—now we can pack up and be off!" was Miss McGregor's joyful cry. "Madeleine, do you hear? Tell Françoise to run to the warehouse and ask Mr. Logan to come to me immediately."

Madeleine dispatched the message in a more courteous form, and the young man reported himself without delay.

"Mr. Logan, can you have the men called in and the boats packed and ready for starting by daylight to-morrow morning?"

"I will do my best, madam; but are you quite sure we shall be permitted to leave?"

Miss McGregor reflected a moment—she had not thought of any further contingency.

"I do not think the Governor will forbid our going. Why should he?"

"For the same reason, perhaps, that the commanding officer did—a fear lest the guns and ammunition should be taken possession of by the hostile Indians."

And another hour showed that Logan was right. Miss McGregor went herself to plead with the Governor to withdraw the interdict which Colonel Bentley had imposed; but all the satisfaction she obtained was,—

"We must wait a little while yet. It will never do to hazard such a cargo in the heart of the enemy's country. We must see what the treaty at the Butte des Morts will

* This wonderful trip was actually made by Governor Cass during the Winnebago war.

effect. If the Winnebagoes listen to reason, and consent to surrender the Red Bird and his accomplices, you can with perfect safety follow in the wake of the military, when they go to the Portage to receive him."

To surrender the Red Bird? Would they be so base so cruel? And was she to wait till such a treachery was promised and in train for consummation? Never! never! He must be warned—he must understand what was demanded from his fellow-chiefs and might possibly be extorted from their fears or their cupidity. *She* must be the one to put him on his guard; to concert with him, if need were, means of escaping the fate that was in contemplation for him.

Miss McGregor revolved all contingencies and probabilities, and in fact settled her plan of action, while appearing to listen to the Governor's lengthy reasons for refusing her request. She then accorded a seeming acquiescence.

"I shall trust to your goodness, sir, to send me word from the treaty-ground at the earliest hour, so that I may join the military fleet on its expedition to the Portage."

"Oh, yes; certainly, certainly. I will send you a trusty messenger, a Menomonee, if possible, who can pilot your boat up the Rapids."

"I have heard there is an Ottawa, Moa-way,—Le Loup,—living among the Menomonees. As I understand his language, he would be a preferable messenger."

"True, true," said the Governor; and, taking out his note-book, he made a memorandum of the name and proposed errand of "The Wolf."

It was all that Miss McGregor could do to possess her soul in apparent patience while the necessary arrangements were being made for the holding of the treaty. The goods to be distributed as presents were already upon the ground, under a military guard, but the boat-loads of provisions

with which to feed the assembled multitude, and the artillery which was to intimidate the refractory, required some little time for their transportation; and although the principal Winnebago chiefs were in the vicinity of the Portage awaiting their summons, several days were necessary to notify them of the precise time of assembling at "the Butte."

The young bourgeois had a great desire to be an eye-witness of scenes and events so important and interesting. The arrival of the chiefs of the different tribes in their most splendid costumes—the solemn session of a council which was to involve matters of life and death—the thousand little incidents tending to illustrate the aboriginal character—the sports, the races, the feastings—all that he had read of, or heard described by old voyageurs, had a charm for his imagination. It might possibly be that he had imparted something of his longings to the younger Miss McGregor, for she ventured the suggestion to her sister,—

"Why could not we take one of the boats and go up to the treaty? We should in that way learn of the very first moment when we could set off for home."

Monica looked searchingly at her, thereby causing her color to rise, and furnishing a satisfactory hint to her keen perceptions.

"I don't think," she said, "that it would be exactly the place for ladies; but I am not sure that it would be a bad plan for Mr. Logan to take Michaud and two or three others and go in a canoe for a day or two to learn how matters are going on."

Her secret charge to the bourgeois, as he was setting forth on the day after the array of boats with their burden of officers, soldiers, and civilians had left for the scene of the treaty, was to this effect:—

"Come back to me at least twenty-four hours before the

breaking-up of the treaty. We must contrive to pass those who are going up the river. My object is, to get a couple of days, at least, in advance of the soldiers. As for following after them, and being subjected to all the inconveniences of a journey upon their trail and that of the savages, it is a thing not to be thought of. I rely upon you to serve me in this matter—your reward shall not be wanting."

She uttered the last with a smile of such peculiar meaning, that the pulses of the young man leaped, sending the blood to the very roots of his hair. For a moment he did not speak; yet he was presently able to answer composedly, with assurances of fidelity and discretion, and forthwith proceeded to make his preparations for immediate departure for the Butte des Morts.*

CHAPTER XXIX.

Several days elapsed before Logan returned. The news he brought was, that the Winnebagoes had declined making an engagement to surrender the accused party; all they would say in the matter was, "They would tell Wau-nig-sootsh-kah and Wee-kau what their Great Father required, and if they chose to give themselves up they could do so."

Arguments and threats having produced no more satisfactory result, it was resolved to try what virtue there might be in sword and bayonet. Accordingly, the military commander of Fort Howard, Colonel Bentley, was in-

* Hillock of the dead—a burial-place for the slain in a bloody battle.

structed to take as large a proportion of his force as could be spared from the defence of the Fort, together with such militia and volunteers as could be gathered "on the Bay," and repair to the Portage, to enforce the demand of the Governor.

Of course, the twenty-seven miles between the treaty-ground at *Butte des Morts* and the settlement had to be retraced, and the necessary preparations for the expedition hurried forward with all possible dispatch.

The young officers, with one exception, were forward in begging to be put upon a service which promised active employment and adventure.

Mr. Smithett "could not see what there was so very attractive in going to hunt after such a set of bloodthirsty fellows. There was no saying what they mightn't be up to. For his part, he had been too short a time in the service to care particularly about a change;" and Mrs. Holcomb loudly declared that he was right.

"What in the world should *she* do," she wondered, "if they detailed Smithett for that service? He was all she had to look to for attention, since Lytle went exploring down the Bay and carried Stafford off with him. They might have Holcomb and welcome, if they could make anything out of him, for, in spite of all his promises and paradings, he was getting to be as bad as ever; and he had gone and let that pretty mare 'Lady' get foundered, she believed, just on purpose to spite her!"

Very attentive Mr. Smithett had really been, since the first evening he had spent, by invitation, at Mrs. Holcomb's quarters. It was as pleasing to the homesick youth to detail and describe all that had fallen under his observation in the great world of New York, as it was delightful to the lady to listen.

"I don't see, I am sure," she would observe to her

cousin, or to Madeleine, if she was present, "what Captain Lovel and old Tib and the rest of them mean by laughing as they do at poor Smithett. Mr. Charlie Holcomb began the same game, but I put a stop to it by remarking that I thought he was the dearest little fellow in the world, and understood the best how to entertain ladies. Oh, dear! How I do wish it was not so hot, and musquito-y, and Winnebago-Indian-y, and everything! Oh! excuse me, Madeleine; I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. But it is, you know, rather hard that those people have raised such a disturbance that we can't get up one little dance, when Lieutenant Smithett knows how to waltz, and has promised to teach me as soon as ever he can get a chance."

The hours passed together by Madeleine and Grace seldom afforded them the enjoyment of an unrestrained outpouring of sentiment and affection. Mrs. Holcomb made it a point to add herself to the company when she had no visitors; and when she had, she was equally persistent in demanding that "the girls," as she called them, should come down into her parlor and help entertain them.

"Why, Grace," she would say, "what do you suppose I wanted of you, if it was not for company? I dare say all the fellows are whispering among themselves that I sent for you out here '*to swap off*'—that's what they always say—saucy creatures! And they'll think I've got my eye on old Tib for you, if you sit up in your room next to his so much."

"I am not afraid of the young officers fancying I am ready to be swapped off to Mr. Tibbets or any other of their circle," was her cousin's calm reply.

"Oh, you needn't turn up your nose at Tib. He is not so very old,—though we call him so, because his hair is so light it looks like gray, and because he is so old-

fashioned and fidgety in his ways. Why, he is only a lieutenant! A man never gets to be a captain in the army till he is pretty well on in the world. If your sister did but know it, Madeleine, Lytle is no chicken. He knows how to get himself up splendidly, don't he? He has had plenty of time to practice. I sha'n't be troubled with him coming after Grace, for they say he will look out for money the first thing; red, black, or yellow, he don't care, so he only gets the shiners, Holcomb says."

"I wonder you repeat any such foolish speeches of your husband's," said Grace, who felt sure Madeleine must make the application.

"It isn't often I do quote his sayings, I'm sure," said the appreciative wife, "but now and then they happen to be apropos. Did you know that Dalton was a widower? We thought it was a great risk for Lytle to go off and leave him in possession of the ground," with a significant look at Madeleine, "but it seems he knew what he was about. Did your sister know that he had been married before? And was that the reason she refused him?"

"I do not think my sister refused Captain Dalton. I do not suppose he ever asked her to marry him," said Madeleine.

"Oh, yes, he did! He went up on purpose to propose one day when you were down here. Some one said that as soon as he saw you land he fixed up and started off. You see, we know everything that is going on, here in the garrison. I could tell you lots of things that would make you open your eyes. Why, do you know that Mrs. Bond can't be trusted in the sutler's store without a clerk specially detailed to watch her all the time, to see that she doesn't crib anything?"

"Oh, Edith," said her cousin, "how can you tell such things of an officer's wife?"

"It's true, every word of it. Why, she will send over for a box of ribbons of some particular color she wants, and say she will look at them and select the piece that suits her. They have to take the trouble to measure every piece before sending it. When she sends back word, as she always does, that they are none of them exactly the shade she wanted, then they have to go to work and measure all over again, and quietly send her at once the bill for the number of yards she has cut off from here and there a piece."

"It's very shameful in the sutler's clerks to report such things of a lady," said Grace, indignantly.

"It's true, every word of it. My Norah was in their quarters one evening when there was a terrible rumpus on account of such a bill being sent in. One of the little girls came into the kitchen crying, because, she said, papa was swearing at mamma, and almost shaking her, about the new trimming on her hat. They have the times there, I can tell you."

"You need not," said her cousin; "it is not pleasant to hear about them."

"You can't deny that it serves her right. Women who have nothing to depend upon but a captain's pay, and with five children at that, have no business to set up to dress like those who have something else to look to. And, after all, she looks like a mere dowdy, as Smithett says. She can't contrive to look fashionable, with all her pickings and stealings."

"Oh, Edith! what an expression! Pray don't use such language."

"Well, I won't," said Mrs. Holcomb, laughing, "for, after all, it isn't quite correct, seeing that her husband, in the end, has to pay for it all. Scott takes good care of that. Catch him losing a shred or scrap as large as your finger-

nail! Why, she went to the shanty* one day and asked to look at some lace capes, and, as she was turning them over in the box, she took one, as she thought, unobserved. She never said a word about it. Scott waited a couple of days, and then, just after the 'Roast Beef' had been beaten and he knew Bond had gone home to dinner, he sent his clerk with a note to say that if Mrs. Bond had done looking at the cape she took home he would like to have it, as he had an opportunity of disposing of it. You may depend she sent it right back, with an apology for not returning it before. What do you think of that?"

"I think we had better talk of something else," replied Grace.

"And so do I—for I hadn't got through with poor Dalton. Madeleine, didn't you know that after he got his answer he went right back to Mackinac in the little schooner that was here last week? Tell your sister that I don't think it was fair in her to let him offer himself if she did not mean to accept him."

"My sister never did let Captain Dalton offer himself," said Madeleine, with earnestness. "She is too honest to do such a thing. Captain Dalton must have seen, if he had any eyes, that she did not care for him——"

"Yes—but men that are in love haven't any eyes, as a general rule—and ladies do marry men they don't care for. So I guess poor Dalton ran his risk, and got the mitten, as they say. And now Lytle, when he comes back, will have it all his own way; for he is one of those sensible people who *have* got eyes in their head."

Even the visits of Mr. Ewing had to be paid to Mrs. Holcomb rather than to her young relative; and, as a rule, the hostess monopolized the entire conversation unless the

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* The sutler's store.

entrance of some other young gentleman effected a temporary diversion of her powers of entertainment. Any subject beyond the merest chit-chat or gossip was sure of being met by some derisive remark. "Upon my word, Grace, I had supposed you had left your school-books behind you, in blue old Connecticut! We haven't much fancy for dictionaries and philosophies out West." Or, "Really, Grace, Mr. Ewing will think you are going to turn aboriginal, if you catechize him so much about the Wy-an-dots and the Pottowattamies, with their wigwams, and their pappooses, and their gibberish. Let's be civilized people now for a little while, I beg."

Poor Miss Latimer! The romance of Western life was fast fading with her into the dimness of a distant vision.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE military flotilla was at length ready to set forth for "the Portage." All that Miss McGregor could obtain from the Governor and the commanding officer was a permission for the boats under the charge of the bourgeois to proceed a little in advance of the others, so as to be the first to pass the different chûtes or rapids (of which there were three considerable ones before reaching *Lac aux Puans**), and to wait above, in some quiet spot, for the remainder of the fleet to join them. Having seen the expedition well under way, the Governor then turned his face eastward to another sphere of duty.

Moa-way was duly installed by Miss McGregor as pilot,

* Winnebago Lake.

and, thanks to his skill and the energetic good will of the clerks and *engagés*, the Company's boats shot rapidly ahead. The Kakalin and Little Chûte were safely passed, and the Grande Chûte reached, long before the military boats had finished their first portage.

Nothing is now left of the Grande Chûte save the break in the course of the river whence it derived its name. Its beautiful, romantic banks, and all its wild, solitary charms, have given place to the noise and bustle and levelling processes of civilization. Men of enterprise are making their fortunes on the spot where the deer trod, the wood-duck and prairie-bird reared their young, and the wild thrush carolled his sweet hymn to the parting day.

On the calm, lovely summer evening when the boats pushed in to the landing-place, a little below the fall, and just at the point where the eye could take in the foaming stream, the high wooded banks all tinged with the pink and golden rays of the setting sun, and the deep shadowy recesses, in which might lurk—one hardly knew what—it was scarcely possible to conceive a landscape more replete with loveliness, even though some feelings of awe might temper those of admiration.

The bourgeois and sundry of his men busied themselves in making ready the tent for the young ladies, while others cut down a tree and made a fire, preparatory to "boiling their kettle," the accepted phrase for cooking a meal. "We travelled so many pipes—then we stopped and boiled our kettle." Such is a voyageur's description of the course of a journey.

Madeleine explored the environs of the camping-ground and made herself acquainted with all its attractions, M. Tremblay striding gallantly by her side—a piece of attention, by-the-by, from which Miss McGregor would have taken care to excuse him, had she seen the slightest indi-

cation on the part of young Logan of a design to offer his services. But the bourgeois evidently felt it his place to stimulate the men to diligent perseverance, both by example and encouraging admonitions, and he gave no heed to aught but the present care of his charge and diligent preparation for the next day's duties. Only when supper was over, and all things were reduced to order and quietness, did Monica perceive him stealing away to the spot where Madeleine was standing upon a point jutting far into the stream, whence she could gain the fairest view of the landscape as it lay bathed in the soft, silvery moonlight.

They stood together for several minutes—whether engaged in conversation or not Miss McGregor could not determine.

"He must pay me for my indulgence by double diligence to-morrow, if that be possible," she said. "We are now more than a day ahead of the soldiers, but I shall not be contented till I have put three days, beyond all peradventure, between us. If Madeleine would only look a little sad and dejected, I could urge him on with the plea that she is pining and anxious on our father's account; but, having assured her again and again that there was no danger to those at the Prairie, I hardly know in what way now to disturb her provoking tranquillity."

Madeleine before long returned to the tent, and a very short time had elapsed ere, lulled by the murmur of the rushing waters, and the chirping notes of the insects with which the woods abounded, she was wrapped in the sweetest of slumbers.

Miss McGregor remained for yet a short space, to concert with the bourgeois the arrangements for the following day.

The Frenchmen were hurried to an early repose—no chatting around the fire, no gay jokes with the clerks or

each other, their customary recreation after a hard day's toil. They were warned that they would be aroused with the earliest dawn, and with that in view should lose no half-hour of their resting-time.

Madeleine thought she had only begun her first dream, when she was startled by the clear, ringing call,—

"How! how! how!"

"What lungs he has!" said her sister, in the calm tone which betokened that she was not newly aroused. "What a splendid physique, every way! Quite superior to the station he occupies, in manners, and, I should judge, in antecedents. When we get better acquainted, I dare say he will tell us something of his history."

Madeleine made no answering comment. She raised the corner of the tent to look abroad. All objects were yet so indistinct that the woods and cliffs looked like an ebony landscape cut out and laid against the sky. The voices of the men chattering, or occasionally shouting to each other, broke the stillness; but there was no sound of axes, for every appliance for cooking the breakfast had been made ready the night before.

"Why are they up so early? What is the hurry?" she asked of her sister. "Do you think we could help them any by getting up now?"

Miss McGregor was already nearly dressed.

"Yes, we can help them by packing all our things away neatly, for the men to carry over the portage; and we can spread the mat for the table-cloth here on the floor of the tent; and, if the dew is not too heavy, we can see the dishes from the mess-basket rinsed and made ready for use. It will be too damp to breakfast in the open air."

The two sisters soon had their tent arranged like a comfortable little parlor. The bear-skins and blankets which had formed their bed were rolled into a sort of low divan

to furnish seats. It was Miss McGregor's resolute hands that drew the cords to confine them in shape, Madeleine's delicate ones proving quite inadequate to such service. She laughed merrily at her fruitless efforts, for the exhilaration of this mode of travelling, and her sister's unwonted kindness of demeanor, put her in exuberant spirits. She was in a glow of contentment as well as of exercise which added a charm to her beauty, when she walked forth to watch the progress of affairs without.

Moa-way, whom she had not seen before, for he had been in the leading boat, and had quitted it for a call on his family after all had passed the Kakalin rapids, was now at the camp.

In the background were some two or three of the younger members of his family, lounging in a nonchalant fashion against the bank or trees, not dreaming that the white man would suspect the anxiety with which they were awaiting the moment when a meal of bread and pork would be hospitably tendered them.

The Ottawa had drawn his knife from the scabbard around his neck, and was peeling and trimming sundry *broches*, or forked sticks, on which to broil or toast the viands in preparation. His greeting was cheery and animated, as if to banish the impression of their last meeting in the woods above the Kakalin. He spoke rapidly, in French, not of the most elegant, it is true, but perfectly comprehensible.

"Ah! la petite! Bon-jour! bon-jour!" And he held his knife and broches in one hand, that he might shake the one she offered with the other. "Moa-way will keep his knife close," suiting the action to the word, and with a laugh clutching his weapon against his side; "he will not frighten the little fawn again. She is not like her sister. The sister has the blood of the braves. The knife and the

tomahawk do not make her blench. She should not sit with her hands tied, under a roof-tree. She should wear the mitasses and the match-ee-ko-tah. She should be the wife of a great chief, and bear sway over thousands."

Moa-way's eyes kindled, and his gestures expressed his enthusiasm.

"Oh, Moa-way, is it you, the pupil of Father Sylvan, who talk thus?" said Madeleine, gently. "Do you not know that my sister is a Christian woman,—that it is better she should fulfil her vocation in performing the quiet duties which the good God has given her to perform? Remember, we are Sau-ga-nash* as well as Puan."† Madeleine pronounced the latter word with an accent of ill-concealed disgust.

The Ottawa did not wait for her to complete her sentence.

"You?" he broke in, with a shrug and a laugh. "You a Puan! *Kah-ween!*"‡ He turned and strode away, leaving Madeleine to her reflections.

"He despises me, and thinks me unworthy of my lineage, because I am not heroic and patriotic, like Monica" —such were her thoughts. "Oh, if I only did not belong to them! If I were but an Ottawa, or a Chippewa, or even a Sioux! Why is it that there is not one sentiment of sympathy or natural feeling for them in my breast,—not even when I know that poor mamma belonged to them? If I could only admire and honor the race as Monica does! And yet, seeing them so fallen from their high estate, must not the very feeling which binds her to them make her still more unhappy?"

So deep was her reverie that, although she had walked towards the bank, her eye scarcely took in the dark waters changing as they fell into billowy foam, the forest crowning

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* British. † Winnebago. ‡ No, indeed!

the lofty banks just kissed by the rays of the rising sun, the boats, which lay moored along the shore, and out of which the busy voyageurs were engaged in transporting such of the loading as might be injured by the dashing waters through which the boats were to be dragged *à cordon*, and placing it at the foot of the rugged path which led up the bank and along the brow of the hill to the end of the portage. It was an animated picture. The men in their *tuques* or scarlet caps and parti-colored sashes; the clerks, in compliment to the lady passengers, attired even more neatly than was their wont, in gay calico shirts and hat-bands of ostrich-feathers—all in a state of busiest activity, almost tumbling over each other, like the denizens of an ant-hill.

Madeleine was awakened from her painful train of thought by a gentle, manly voice near her.

"Will you come to breakfast? Your sister has sent me for you."

The bourgeois did not offer his arm, but he took the liberty of occasionally supporting her steps as she picked her hazardous way among the stones and little pools of water to the firm land and the open space where, in front of the tent, the smoking dishes and fragrant, steaming coffee-pot were standing on a wooden box which, with the mess-basket, served the place of beaufet.

The crisp ham and toast and the poached eggs were not the chief delicacies of their morning meal. Moa-way presently came forward, presenting his broches garnished with wild pigeons, which, perhaps as an emblematical peace-offering, he had shot the evening before, and had now plucked and prepared for the younger sister.

"Ah! Moa-way," said Madeleine, accepting his offering with a sweet grace that brought a smile to the countenance of the good-natured Ottawa, "you are truly a

Weem-tee-goash!* You, one of the lords of creation, waiting on our feeble sex! Take care that they do not hear of it before the next treaty," she added, archly.

"It would be better to be made a squaw of for good behavior than for bad," said Moa-way; "but I am not afraid—me."

"*Mais, mais*, what all dis?" asked M. Tremblay, quite mystified. "Make a squaw? What for the treaty make Le Loup into a squaw? I no understand."

"I think Mr. Logan must tell you the story," said Miss McGregor, "if he is not wanted just yet to see after his men. We are speaking of an incident that took place at the treaty which was held at the Butte des Morts last week."

CHAPTER XXXI.

THERE being little time to spare, the young bourgeois made the narrative which he began at Miss McGregor's instance as succinct as possible.

An old Menomonee woman, upon the treaty-ground, made a complaint to her *Father*, the Governor, that a young man of her tribe had beaten her daughter—in fact, had almost killed her. The young lady was presented as evidence of the justice of her complaint. She told a piteous story, which touched the heart of the Governor and drew from him a promise that he would attend to her case. The name of the young man was given, and the matter inquired into.

The chiefs and braves were summoned before the Com

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* Frenchman.

missioners, the young man being present. They were told the circumstances of the case—informed that none but a woman would be guilty of such a cowardly act—that the young man had shown himself to be nothing but a woman, with none of the elements of a brave in his composition—that an example must be made of such a foolish fellow. It was, therefore, determined to have him dressed in a woman's apparel and exhibited upon a mound which stood in the midst of the treaty-ground.

The culprit was, accordingly, brought out in full costume—his hair clubbed behind à la squaw, rings on his fingers, ear-bobs in his ears, an ornamented match-ee-ko-tah or petticoat, red and blue leggings, and all the paraphernalia of the sex. Addresses were made by many of those present, all tending to cover him with shame, and which were greeted by the women and children with great applause. After the bystanders had enjoyed their fun for an hour or more, the metamorphosed gallant was told that he was at liberty to go and see if he could find any young man who would take him for a wife. He broke from the assemblage on a run, amid the shouts and whoops of all present; and that was the last that was heard of him during the treaty.*

"Mais, mais," exclaimed M. Tremblay, for whose gratification the story had been told, "what a horror! to strike the fair sec! le scélérat! But I tink it not too polite in de Governor to turn him into one woman because he act bad!"

"I quite agree with you, monsieur," said Miss McGregor, rising. "And now we must do our best to aid

* The above anecdote having been given to the public in a somewhat different form, the writer has taken the liberty of transcribing this version from the manuscript journal of one present at the scene—a person whose dicta in matters relating to our red brethren are esteemed unquestionable.

Michaud, who is waiting, I see, to take possession of our mess-basket and place it among the rest of the *butin.*"*

It was quite wonderful the celerity with which, under the direction of the bourgeois and old Michaud, the tent was *démontée*, and all things packed and ready for transportation across the portage, only a couple of small tents being left to afford shelter to the ladies during the time they might choose to remain at their present station. Madeleine watched with interest the process of covering the boats with their canvas prélarts, then of attaching a rope to each bow, to be carried over the shoulder of a leader or guide, while the sides of the boats were manned by detachments of sturdy voyageurs, who, making their way waist-deep through the foaming rapids, helped to conduct their charge along its perilous way. There were, also, in each boat, men with long, stout poles, with which to aid in releasing their craft should it become stuck and jammed among the boulders which encumbered the channel.

"How I wish Grace were here! how she would enjoy all this!" said Madeleine to herself.

It was indeed an exhilarating spectacle, the boat in which stood Moa-way as pilot leading off, and soon almost hidden amid the foam, while his voice rang out from time to time in an Indian whoop that might well startle the bird in its nest or the beast in his lair.

Michaud, as adjutant, was not wanting in his part of the chorus, but chimed in, from time to time, with,—

"Avance, avance, nos gens! Ah-h, sacré mon diable, nous voilà plantés! Pousse, pousse! soulève, soulève un petit brin! Tout d'accord; voilà, voilà, elle marche. Whoop! whoop! who-o-o-op!"†

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* Freight.

† Pull away, men! Ah, the deuce! there we are, stuck! Push, push; raise up a little bit! All together; there, there, now she goes. Whoop!

And those in charge of the boats which followed emulated the vigorous old voyageur, and shouted and swore in good set terms to the best of their ability.

As the last boat had passed up the Chûte, or chief fall, and the little fleet toiled its way along through the rapids close under the overhanging bank, choosing the channels where the current was smoothest, the sounds became mingled into one general volume, like the fanfare of a trumpet softened by distance and by the murmur of the rushing waters.

"Where is Mr. Logan?" asked Miss McGregor, approaching her sister from the place where she had been inspecting the heaped-up cargoes and making divers inquiries of the clerk who had them in charge. "I thought he was here with you."

"With me? No; he has gone in one of the boats."

"Well, perhaps, on the whole, that is better."

Madeleine looked at her sister in surprise.

"I mean," said Monica, "that, as he is new to this route, it is perhaps better that he should acquaint himself with it thoroughly; still, I was not aware he was gone." Then, murmuring to herself, "How backward he is to take advantage of the opportunities I afford him! Is it pride, or is it prudence?"

It was a very warm morning. As the sun mounted in the heavens, it was no longer comfortable to remain sketching upon the bank, and Madeleine was driven to the shelter of the little tent, where her sister was already seated with a book. She was not reading, however, as Madeleine soon perceived; she only turned over the leaves restlessly for a while, then she would fall into a reverie. At length she said,—

"I wonder how long it will take them to get the boats to the end of the portage?"

"About a couple of hours, if they have good luck, I think the bourgeois said. The boats must be heavy, for I observed that they left a part of the loading in them."

"Yes, such as cannot be hurt by the spray. It must be two hours already since they left."

"Oh, no; it is only an hour and a quarter."

Miss McGregor had no watch. Madeleine's had been sent her by her father as a Christmas-gift the year before. Her sister looked at it, and remembered with bitterness that it had never occurred to him to make her a similar present.

"He has, to be sure, given me money," she said, mentally; "he has never been stingy towards me, and perhaps he thought I would treat myself to a watch. But why should I? My hours are not so happy that I should keep count of them. Treat myself? Of what value are the toys we purchase for ourselves? A gift, a token of affection, is what one prizes, however small its intrinsic worth may be; yet how few such have I received!"

She could not remain tranquilly beside her sister. It was in vain to try to fix her attention on her book, and conversation was out of the question; they had too little in common. All the topics of mutual interest had been exhausted during the first weeks of their reunion—there was nothing left to narrate, or inquire about, or sympathize over. A sudden thought occurred to her.

"Where is Monsieur?"

"Asleep in the tent yonder," said her sister, laughing. "He has been in rather a taking about having had to breakfast so early; now he is making himself amends by dreaming, I suppose, of the ten pretty children and the little angel of a wife."

"He'll not sleep long, I dare say," said Monica. "If you don't mind, I think I'll walk to the other end of the

portage. I know the path well; in fact, there is no mistaking it. It is best that I should be there when the boats arrive, to see the men sent back without delay, after the loading."

"Why without delay?" asked Madeleine. "Will there not be plenty of time? I don't understand this hurry. Some one said that we were already more than twenty-four hours in advance of the other boats; and if we have got to wait till they overtake us——"

"I have no thoughts of waiting one moment beyond what is necessary for reloading the boats and getting under way."

"But we have the positive orders of the commanding officer."

"His orders are nothing to me, now that we are out of his reach."

"Is there not danger—a penalty? Won't it bring the bourgeois—that is, won't it bring us all—into trouble?"

"If there is any penalty or trouble, it will fall on me. I take the responsibility—I am the head in this affair. We are off again just as soon as the boats can be got ready, and if you are as anxious to get to your father as I have reason to believe, you will expedite the voyage all that is in your power."

"All that is in my power?" repeated Madeleine. "That is very little, surely. What can *I* do?"

"You can, at least, refrain from interposing objections which would certainly, with me, not have the slightest weight."

So saying, Miss McGregor quitted her sister, and was soon lost to view, as she ascended the steep, winding path which led to the forest-crowned summit.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE chorus of voices warned Monica, as she walked, of the progress the boats were making, and presently an opening in the foliage gave her a clear view of what was passing below.

It was the last boat that was being poled and dragged along the now placid waters. She hastened her steps towards the landing-point at the farther end of the portage. Some of the boats were already there, and being moored fast, which preliminary accomplished amid shouts and jests and no small amount of pushing and scrambling, the voyageurs leaped on shore, and, each choosing his own place of repose, were soon stretched at ease, smoking the pipe which was to cheer and refresh after their arduous toil.

Moa-way was making ready his store of kinnikinnick with which to solace his well-tasked throat, when Miss McGregor made her appearance on the overhanging bank and beckoned to him.

"I am sorry to incommode you, Moa-way, but we have, as yet, had no opportunity of fully concerting our plans for the next few days." She returned a few rods upon the path, the Ottawa following her; then, drawing aside from the road, she seated herself on the trunk of a fallen tree under the shelter of a covert which protected them from observation. Moa-way was sufficiently civilized to do the same at her bidding, though, truth to tell, the lap of his mother earth would have been a preferable seat to him.

"How long do we stop here?" was the young lady's first question.

"Three hours—four hours—till the men have smoked their pipes and reloaded the boats."

"And after that we are off. Where do they boil their kettle?"

"Near Four-Legs' village."

"That is the country of the Puans."

"Yes, but we shall put the river between us and our friend Four-Legs."

"They have canoes."

"Yes, and the Chee-mo-ko-mon* have guns."

"Oh, it is not of violence I am afraid; but, of course, a little bird has whispered the chief that our boats have been detained all this time by the commanding officer. Four-Legs, we know, is wishing now to make friends with his Great Father and save his people from the horrors of war. Will he use, do you think, any stratagems to detain us?"

"Kah-ween," said Moa-way, in an accent of scorn. "Why should he?"

"For this reason. If the chiefs have made up their minds to surrender Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, they may fear that I would warn him and disappoint them."

"They have not promised to give up L'Oiseau Rouge—they will not do it."

"If I could only be assured of that!" said Miss McGregor, clasping her hands. "But we must leave nothing to chance. Who knows what resolution they may suddenly take? Will the bourgeois rest all night at the camping-ground you speak of?"

"Yes—the men will be tired."

"But we can be off at a very early hour to-morrow morning?"

"Yes—and cross the lake to the Grand Butte"—he

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* Americans—literally, Big Knives.

looked up at the sky—"there are clouds that will bring wind—it will be from the west—it will hinder rather than help us."

Miss McGregor gave a sigh of vexation. "The men must pull the harder, then," she said. "You will cheer them on, Moa-way. Then at the Butte you leave us, and make all possible speed across the country to the Portage. Oh that I had but some vehicle, or a woman's saddle, that I might travel those seventy miles by land, instead of crawling the long, winding, tedious way by water!"

"I shall sleep at Ma-zhee-gaw-gaw's village, or perhaps at Green Lake, to-morrow night," said the Ottawa.

"And in the morning hasten on to the Barribault——"

"No—L'Oiseau Rouge* will be at Lac des Bœufs,† in the lodge of Le Tonnerre qui Roule."‡

"How do you know that?"

"It was told me. He will be at the appointed spot when you arrive."

"That is well—my heart is lighter now. I know, Moa-way, I may depend on your fidelity. I shall not be disappointed through your delay. Let me but find Wau-nig-sootsh-kah at Lake Puckaway, as he promises; that is all I ask."

"Have no fears. I shall seek out L'Oiseau Rouge at the first moment of my arrival, and if by any chance he has not come to the rendezvous, I shall travel right on to the Portage. The heart of L'Oiseau Rouge is heavy—I may find him sick in his lodge."

"At the Barribault?"

"No—by the side of one of the little lakes beyond the trading-house of Lapierre."

"Go to him, go to him, Moa-way. Well may his heart

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* The Red Bird. † Buffalo Lake. ‡ Whirling Thunder—a chief.

be heavy. His people crushed to earth, their very name about to be blotted out, a mark for persecution, oppression, and scorn! And he—but, Moaway, bring him to me at Lake Puckaway. Our boats *must* be there by the day after to-morrow. The bourgeois will make all speed for my sake. And now go and smoke your pipe with old Michaud. I will sit here awhile by myself. My heart is sad and wretched, while thinking on my unhappy cousin."

The Ottawa returned to his companions, and Miss McGregor sat a long, long time plunged in a profound reverie. Her thoughts went back from the present, and travelled over years of alternate bliss and sorrow. Every event, almost every word, of the past, from her early girlhood to the last few troubled weeks, seemed to come up in array before her; and even the future, with its possible horrors, its certain desolation, formed a part of the shifting pageant.

She was so absorbed as to be lost to outward objects, and yet she had a faint impression of having seen, through the interstices of her leafy covert, the bourgeois passing along the path, on his return to the camping-ground. Then all was again quiet; for how long a time she could not tell, she had thought and felt and suffered so much.

At length there were again sounds, from the direction of the foot of the rapids, of persons slowly approaching—a light step and a firm, manly tread; there were also voices that she could not mistake. Her pulses suddenly stopped, for she recognized the soft, murmuring tones which are not used by mere acquaintances as they pass along the way. Just as the steps came opposite her retreat, and where her eye could take in, without screen, the figures of the bourgeois and her sister, the veil of the latter caught on a projecting branch, and lifted her broad hat, which owing to the heat was untied, quite off her head. Madeleine laughed

merrily as it swung in the air. Logan seized and released it; and, smoothing lightly back her hair, which had by the movement been rumpled and disarranged, he stooped and snatched a kiss ere replacing it; then, as if the temptation were too great to be resisted, he gathered her towards him in a close, fervent embrace.

It was the work of a moment; the hat was again settled, and before Monica could collect her amazed senses he had drawn the hand of the young girl under his arm, and they were walking quietly and leisurely out of sight.

So stunned and bewildered was Miss McGregor that for the first moments she sat perfectly passive, her hands dropped upon her lap, and her ideas whirling indistinctly through her brain. At length she spoke:—

"So, it has come to this! She, with all her pride! A McGregor of the McGregors! So deceitfully quiet and demure, too! And I, with all my penetration, have been reproving her for her reserve and distance of manner! There, at least, I must exonerate him—he has not labored for concealment; I have seen it all. But Madeleine! the little, modest, delicate girl!" Her lip curled in scorn. "Only one little month! And a person in his position!"

Here Monica's conscience became painfully admonitory. Who had taught her young sister to make light of the barrier which pride was, at first, ready enough to rear between herself and the bourgeois? Who had planned and contrived? Who had encouraged the young man in a way but for which he would never have presumed to lift his eyes to his master's daughter? And if he had not wooed, Madeleine had not been won. No; with all her bitter feelings towards her sister, Monica was forced to admit that the young man must have pleaded well his cause before his suit had found a favorable hearing.

What was now to be done? What would be the result

and the winding-up of this unlooked-for turn of affairs, this crisis that she had speculated upon, without dreaming that it could actually come to pass? How was she to prison back the waters she had herself let loose? Alas! that was a thing not to be thought of. Monica knew too much of the power of "almighty love" to have the slightest hope that any intervention of her own, as things now stood, would avail aught.

"Madeleine would either retort upon me the arguments she has heard me advance touching the limits of a father's authority, or she would quietly and without controversy go her own way in the matter, as she has done all along. No; my interference would do no good. It is too late now; there is nothing but to let things take their course, and come what come may. Of course they must not have a hint that I suspect the game that is going on, for we are in no position to bring matters to a rupture. All I can do is to watch them closely till I get her safe back to my father. My father! What will he say? What will he think of the manner in which I have fulfilled my promise? Oh, if I had not undertaken this ungrateful task! If I had only remained at home, all that has taken place would never have happened! Wau-nig-sootsh-kah would sooner have cut off his right hand than have joined an expedition into our neighborhood with evil intent, had I been there!"

Her mind diverted from one perplexity by another and predominating trouble, Miss McGregor roused herself and went to find M. Tremblay and to punish him for the negligent manner in which he had discharged the trust committed to him. This she accomplished by a demand of the alarmed and bewildered gentleman, as she unceremoniously waked him from his slumber, where she could find her sister.

"Mais, mais! Miss Madeleine? She cannot be loosed!

She cannot fall into de big deep water! Ah! mon Dieu!" cried the poor monsieur, fairly dancing about in his distress, "Ah! Miss Monique! Ah! your respectable fader! I nevair, nevair! Miss Madeleine! Miss Madeleine!" And when he had run hither and thither, and shouted, and wiped his eyes, and wrung his hands, for a sufficient time, Miss McGregor, feeling that she had insured the most lynx-like watchfulness for the future, condescended to put a period to his agony by informing him that her sister was safe at the other end of the portage.

"It would be well," she remarked to the poor gentleman, as she kept pace with his brisk steps along the brow of the hill, "that we should choose our times for sleeping with discretion, seeing that we are approaching a territory where it cannot be affirmed that all the inhabitants are friendly or even pacific."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE voyageurs had smoked their pipes, and had afterwards, by dint of numerous journeys, brought across the brow of the high bank the whole amount of heavy lading and repacked the boats. They were a numerous company, and, under the supervision of the bourgeois and old Michaud, they had worked with a will.

The clerks, too, bore their part in expediting matters; but it was Michaud who was the inspiring genius. He had ever some joke, some witticism, some *tour*, by which to raise a laugh and dissipate the sense of fatigue caused by toil and heat. The *mangeurs de lard*, or new hands, were particularly the objects of his pleasantry.

"Ah ça!" he exclaimed, seizing by both legs a particularly spare, spindle-shanked young fellow, who, having had occasion to wade around to the stern of his boat, was at the moment stooping forward to unroll and bring into place his canvas trousers, "Ah ça!—enfin je les ai!"*

"Lâche-moi, lâche-moi, sacré!"† cried the voyageur, in an indignant tone.

"Oh, excusez," said Michaud, with an astonished look, and letting go the legs, "a thousand pardons—I thought it was the tongs that I mislaid last night at the camp."

The unlucky young fellow was called *nos pincettes* from that hour.

While the labor of loading was going on, there could be no regular songs or choruses—these require always the dip of the oar or the paddle for an accompaniment; but the light-hearted Michaud, in a voice which age had but slightly impaired, would troll forth, for the amusement of his auditors, some refrain like the following:—

"On attrappe une fillette,
Mon enfant, à peu près
Comme un soldat prend les poulets.
S'il en voit un hors de sa cage,
Il jette du pain, du fromage,
Tiens, petit, petit, petit;
Le poulet suit,
Et crac!
Le voilà dans son sac!"

Which, if he had had sufficient knowledge of English, he might have rendered,—

"The way to catch a tender maid
Is pretty much the same
As by the roguish soldier played
To coax the barn-yard game.

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* Aha! I've got them at last.

† Let me go, let me go, confound you!

When one outside the coop he sees,
He throws some crumbs of bread or cheese,
Calls, Pretty, pretty, pretty!
The pullet follows—more's the pity—
For, cric, crac!
She's in his haversack."

The afternoon was well advanced before the kegs, hampers, boxes of guns, and merchandise of various sorts, had been transferred to their appropriate places; then, to the cheering strains of "La Jolie Bergère," boat after boat filed off, the chorus,—

"Lève ton pied, ma jolie bergère,
Lève ton pied legèrement,"

seeming to prompt, like an inspiration, the light and uniform lifting of the oars.

The young ladies joined their voices, for Monica had resolved to turn her eyes from all depressing considerations until her interview with the Red Bird should be over.

"It will be of no use to commence an admonition to Madeleine now," she said. "If I speak to her, I shall have to show Logan by my manner how I regard his presumption; and to give him offence, just at this time, is a thing not to be thought of. A few days more or less can make little difference, particularly as Monsieur and I will both be upon the watch to prevent a word in private between them."

Everything had been admirably arranged for the comfort of the young ladies on their voyage. In the centre of their boat was a small cabin—a wooden frame-work with curtains of painted oil-cloth, which could be rolled up to admit the air and light, or closed to exclude the wind and rain. The bourgeois had also hung within it a large mosquito-net in such a way that it could be made available should

those pestiferous insects prove troublesome at any of the points where they would have to "boil their kettle."

Never was there a more lovely sunset than that on which the little fleet pulled in at their camping-ground opposite the village of old Four-Legs. Miss McGregor had looked out with closest vigilance for renewed signals of good understanding between her sister and the bourgeois, but all in vain. They might have been utter strangers—as far as she could detect, they neither looked at nor spoke to each other. A slight circumstance, after a time, showed that Logan was not always upon his guard.

As the boats were just arriving at the end of their voyage, a bird that had been sitting upon a low, projecting bough, looking down into the stream, was startled from his perch, and, taking flight, winged his way to a more distant station.

"What bird is that? I don't remember ever to have seen one like it before," said Madeleine.

"Martin-pêcheur! mauvais augure," shouted Michaud, who was on the bow of the boat.

"Is it the kingfisher?"

"Yes," said the bourgeois, replying to her question; then in a lower tone, as if to himself, "the halcyon of olden time"—and there was a glance at the young lady which did not escape her sister.

"I do not see, then, why Michaud should say the kingfisher is unlucky," pursued Madeleine.

"Perhaps the voyageurs have some superstition about him," said the bourgeois.

"We are not good friends to him in our family," remarked Moa-way, who was seated within hearing. "We wolves are not too fond of Monsieur Martin-pêcheur—us."

"And why not? They look very innocent."

"Ah, we have our story. It is because we are related to Nanna-bozho. And for looking—a person may look

very innocent, and yet be thinking much mischief all the time."

Miss McGregor involuntarily glanced at her sister. Madeleine made no application of Moa-way's remark—she was deep in another subject.

"Nanna-bozho! I have heard of him, or read of him. Who is he? What does he do?"

"He sets all things right that go wrong. He punishes those who do wrong. If one takes the sheets of bark, for instance, from a birch-tree that his neighbor had begun to peel, then Nanna-bozho gives him a lesson. Just as the robber begins to make his bark into mococks, along comes Nanna-bozho and throws among his work a handful of the fine, narrow leaves that he has stripped from the spruce or hemlock. Presently the bark begins to be all sprinkled through with little brown, rough spots, like spruce-leaves, destroying all its beauty, and sometimes causing it to leak. You must often have seen them."

"Yes," said Madeleine, laughing; "but I did not know before how they came there."

"And so," continued Moa-way, "with the maple sap. If a selfish fellow takes away his neighbor's kettle from a fine sugar-tree where it is collecting a good deal of sap, and sets his own empty kettle there, he need not expect to make anything by his trick—Nanna-bozho takes care that when he comes in the morning he shall find nothing better than rain-water in place of the nice maple sap that he expected."

"But why is it that your family don't like the kingfisher, Moa-way? Do they ever do mischief to the wolves?"

M. Tremblay was, by this time, out of the boat, and ready to help the young ladies to land. Madeleine gave him her hand as she followed her sister. "But remember, Moa-way," she said, turning to the Ottawa, "after supper

you must tell me the story you spoke of, about your family and these birds. I am quite curious to know why you do not like them."

Moa-way asked nothing better than to be the orator of the party. He prided himself upon his command of the French, which his intercourse with his sister's family and with the voyageurs through the country gave him the means of preserving; and, besides, he was naturally talkative, and fond of the marvellous. Therefore, as he was secure of a numerous auditory when the labors of the boatmen were over for the day, he did not allow himself to be long importuned, but as soon as all things had been made ready for the following morning (Moa-way had no idea of being interrupted when he had once got a going), he was prepared to gratify his "pretty little fawn" with the story she was so curious to hear.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"NANNA-BOZHO lived in the olden time, with his brother, on the borders of a beautiful lake. This brother bore the form of a wolf—*Moa-way*, you know—that is where we are related; and as he was a great hunter, and brought home to his brother abundant supplies of game of every description, particularly venison, which was his favorite food, Nanna-bozho lived in great luxury and comfort.

"There was one injunction that he was careful to repeat often to his brother when he started for the chase: 'When you are returning to the lodge with your prey, be sure never to cross the lake on your way home. However tired you may be, and however late the hour, you must make

the circuit around it; for deep under its waters there dwells an evil spirit—a prince of darkness—of great cunning and cruelty, into whose hands you might chance to fall.'

"The brother for a long time obeyed faithfully the injunction of Nanna-bozho; but one night, being much belated, he arrived, tired and chilled with the cold, at a point on the lake shore directly opposite his brother's lodge. He looked at the waters—they were bound fast in ice. Across the whole expanse he could see no moving object; everything was lonely and tranquil.

"'Surely there can be no harm in crossing the ice,' he said to himself. 'If it were swimming through the water, then, indeed, there might be danger; but over this I can trot without a person being a bit the wiser.'

"So, setting at naught his brother's caution, he entered on the forbidden path. He had proceeded but a very few steps when suddenly the ice cracked under him, then parted, and he sank, to rise no more.

"Nanna-bozho waited in his lodge the return of his brother. No brother came, and, what was a matter of grief and lamentation, no venison or other game to appease his hunger. All night he watched, wondering and bewailing.

"As day advanced, he thought he would set forth in quest of his brother; and as he walked along the path by which the latter was wont to approach the lodge, he sang, mournfully,—

"Oh! alas! my brother the Wolf is dead! Who will bring me now the nice head of the slaughtered deer?'

"Then he began to upbraid himself. 'That is not what I ought to sing, nor what I meant to sing. I ought to lament for my brother alone. Let me try again.'

"Yet still the dirge fashioned itself into the same strain,—

"'Who will bring me the nice ribs of venison? Alas! ah me! who will bring me the nice fat haunch?'

"By the time he had deplored each portion of the animal which his brother was accustomed to set before him, he arrived at that spot on the border of the lake where the latter had ventured upon the ice. He saw the prints of footsteps, and at once suspected that they were the tracks he was seeking; and, coming closer, he observed that the ice had been broken through, leaving a large open glade.

"He looked around, hoping to see some animal of whom he could make inquiries. No living object met his eye, save a little kingfisher seated on a leafless bough which projected over the water. Nanna-bozho approached him, but the bird took no notice.

"'My brother,' said Nanna-bozho, 'what are you gazing at so intently down in the depths of the lake?'

"Without raising his head, the kingfisher replied,—

"'They have killed Nanna-bozho's brother, and they are about to cut him up. I am waiting in hopes they will throw some of the refuse bits this way, that I may make a good supper.'

"'What!' cried Nanna-bozho, in a fury, 'you are rejoicing over the death of my brother, and hoping to feast upon him?'

"With that he clutched at the neck of the poor kingfisher to throttle him; but being on the alert, and very agile, the bird made a sudden backward movement, and succeeded in escaping the death-grip. The hand of Nanna-bozho only ruffled up and reversed the feathers on the back of his head, which have ever since stood erect, as you see them at the present day."

"Oh, mais, mais! and to think we never knew how this came!" murmured the simple voyageurs, who were seated at a little distance, quite absorbed in the narrative.

"Je conte b'an que ce M. Nanna-bojio ait queu'qu' jour mis la griffe sur le bec de not' bon Coquillard!"* said Michaud, with a mischievous nod towards a comrade whose nose pointed in the direction of the zenith.

Coquillard clapped his hand to his nose, amid the laughter of his companions.

"Silence, nos gens," commanded the bourgeois, "and let Le Loup continue his story."

The Ottawa went on:—"Having ascertained the fate of his brother, Nanna-bozho's thoughts were now bent on revenge. To this end, he resolved to take his station near the spot where his brother had perished, and await an opportunity for dealing with the evil Prince who lived at the bottom of the lake. As he was on his way to do this, he met a company of mice.

"'Come and live with me in this nice warm nest,' he said, opening his vest. The mice accepted his invitation, and the party soon arrived at the spot where his brother's footsteps had disappeared. Here Nanna-bozho transformed himself into an old blackened stump of a tree, placing within his hollow centre the family of mice and his well-tried bow and arrows, for which he hoped ere long to find a use.

"It was the custom of the Demon of the lake to come up occasionally to take the air and amuse himself on the shore; but, as his habits of life rendered this recreation somewhat perilous, he always took care to send forward a detachment of his guards (of which, living in great state, he kept a numerous retinue) to reconnoitre, and report whether the coast was clear.

"After the matter was supposed to be in a measure blown over about Nanna-bozho's brother, the Demon, who, you must know, was in the form of a monstrous serpent, deter-

* I am of opinion that Mr. Nanna-bozho may some day have put his paw on the beak of our good Coquillard.

mined to take a season of enjoyment on the dry land. He accordingly sent up to the surface a couple of his trusty attendants, who were also serpents, to take an observation. The scouts surveyed the lake and its environs.

"'I do not remember to have seen that old dry stump before,' said one; 'indeed, I am certain that it never stood in that spot till now.'

"'Excuse me,' said the other, 'but it strikes me that I have observed it standing there this long time. How could it, by any possibility, have come there all of a sudden?'

"Not being able to agree, they returned and reported the matter to their chief.

"'Go, both of you,' he commanded, 'encircle the old stump with your coils, and draw with all your might. If it is in reality anything but a stump, you will thus detect it.'

"The two guards did as they were bid. They coiled their folds around and around the stump—then they drew and squeezed it with all their might. Poor Nanna-bozho, being so closely pressed, had great difficulty to refrain from crying out. He drew himself in as tight as possible, that he might not feel the coils of the serpents cutting into his bark; and it was with a sigh of relief that he felt himself released, when his tormentors were at length convinced that he was a veritable stump and nothing more.

"The scouts returned and reported to their prince the result of their experiment. The one, however, who had been the skeptic, could not help adding that 'he thought he heard a slight squeak just as they were withdrawing their embrace from the old stump.'

"'Then go again,' said their chief; 'put on more strength than before. Be sure you do not return to me until you are fully satisfied.'

"This time the two guards used redoubled efforts. They

squeezed poor Nanna-bozho with such force that he was compelled to rid himself of the little mice that he had sheltered in his bosom. As they ran forth from an opening in his side, the scouts shouted,—

"'Oh, it is indeed a stump! It was the poor little mice that we heard squeaking.'

"The account that they carried back to their prince was, this time, quite satisfactory. He rose from his home in the bed of the lake, and, accompanied by a concourse of his serpent guards and attendants, sought the shore, where, after basking and amusing themselves for awhile in the pleasant sunshine, they all fell asleep.

"'Now is my time,' thought Nanna-bozho. He drew forth his bow, and, aiming with care, sent an arrow straight into the breast of the sleeping monster; this done, he stole quietly away and returned to his lodge. Here he brooded and brooded over the death of his brother, hardly comforted by his act of vengeance, for he did not know how far it had been successful.

"At length he stole abroad in search of news, hoping to learn that his enemy was dead and past all power of further mischief. As he walked moodily along, he met a very old and miserable-looking woman.

"'Good-morning, mother,' he said, accosting her. 'What is the news? What is going on in the world?'

"'Oh! don't you know that the Demon of the lake is very ill—at the point of death?'

"'Indeed! Is it so? What is the matter with him?'

"'Somebody has shot an arrow straight into his heart. We think it was Nanna-bozho. However that may be, he is lying ill in his lodge, and they have called me to attend him. I am just now engaged in gathering roots and herbs to make a medicine for him which I think will cure him.'

"Nanna-bozho's plans were laid in a twinkling. He

began by throttling the old dame; then he divided her skin (there was but little else of her) and inclosed himself in it with so much care and art that no one could have doubted it was the old woman herself. Adopting her hobbling gait, he went to the borders of the lake, and, the attendants who were waiting for the crone being quite deceived, he was soon conducted into the royal presence.

"The wounded prince was lying upon his bed on the floor of the lodge, while around him were his numerous retinue, watching and waiting upon him. Nanno-bozho perceived that the arrow was still sticking in the wound he had inflicted. He approached with an air of tenderness, and, feigning to minister to his patient, he pushed the arrow still deeper into the wound. The sufferer gave a dreadful groan, but the pretended nurse exclaimed,—

"'Ah! excellent! He is better—he is getting better.'

"Presently she renewed her cares, and adroitly thrust in the weapon still deeper, crying out, as before, 'He is doing well. The medicine is doing him good!'

"At the moment the poor prince was in his last agony, his attendants became aware of what was going on, and they one and all set up a shout, 'It is not the old woman —it is Nanna-bozho. Kill him! kill him!'

"Away fled Nanna-bozho, dropping the skin of the old woman in his flight, while behind him pursued the yelling crew, with shouts of,—

"'Chase him! catch him! kill him!'

"The waters of the lake rose around him as he gained the shore. They spread over the dry land, rising and rising behind him and almost overtaking him, as he strained every nerve to gain some high eminence which would prove a place of safety.

"At length he attained a spot where the waters could not reach him, and here for a long, long time he lived a sad

and solitary life, lamenting his dear brother the Wolf, who used to bring him such nice supplies of venison."*

CHAPTER XXXV.

Miss McGregor found an opportunity for a few words of private conversation with the bourgeois before retiring to rest.

"I cannot doubt that you will agree with me," she said, "as to the necessity of putting a comfortable distance between ourselves and the hordes who are following us. I do not speak so much of the soldiers; though they are sometimes inclined to be lawless, I take it for granted that their officers will have them sufficiently under control. But for that bevy of undisciplined Menomonees and Waubanakees which Colonel Bentley has pressed into his service, I confess I shrink from too close a contact with them!"

"That I can easily believe," said the bourgeois.

Miss McGregor had hoped he would be prompt with the suggestion, "Let us, then, press on as fast as possible, and keep out of their way;" but he contented himself with listening respectfully to what she should have further to propose.

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* The Indians of the Three Fires—that is, the Chippewas, Ottawas, and Pottowattamies—have a tradition of a universal deluge, and of the preservation of Nanna-bozho on an elevated point, in the manner of Noah upon Mount Ararat. Their legend has this difference, however, that they give to Nanna-bozho the credit of reconstructing the world from the small floating masses of grass and soil which he found means to gather as they drifted past him.

"It is true," she continued, "that we are now some hours ahead of them——"

"At least twenty-four hours," said Logan; "and if we keep at the distance of one encampment from them we shall probably be safe from all annoyance."

Monica had said, in her self-communings during the last few hours, that she would, as far as lay in her power, undo the mischief she had already wrought, by placing a barrier between the two young people for the rest of the voyage. She struggled hard for a few minutes to preserve her integrity.

"Having lived all my life upon the frontier, and knowing these people so well——" she said, with some hesitation.

"Yes," assented the bourgeois, "that would be a reason why you would have no feeling of fear in regard to them."

Miss McGregor felt herself driven from her intrenchment.

"It cannot be helped," she said to herself. "If I perish, I perish. *He* must not be sacrificed to a scruple. The end sanctifies the means; or, if not, I can atone. Are there not penances, fastings, vigils?" She hurried to speak out:—

"For myself, as you say, I should be equal to meeting all sorts of inconveniences, perhaps dangers. But I confess the case becomes quite different when it is a question of exposing my timid, gentle little sister to what must necessarily be our position in case the fleet which is on the way should overtake us and we be thrown pell-mell together."

"I have not much fear of their overtaking us," said the young man. "Still, as their boats come light—only the ammunition and provisions of the command being, as I understand, on board—their portages will be very quickly accomplished. And, after all, it is perhaps safest not to leave matters to any contingency. We had better make

another early start to-morrow morning, and try if we cannot put still another twenty-four hours between us and our distasteful neighbors. Happily, we shall be quit of them at the Portage, which Michaud tells me he expects to reach in four days from this."

It was necessary for Miss McGregor to mark her recognition of the young man's assent to her suggestions in a way that she was certain would be most acceptable to him.

"By the way, Mr. Logan," she said, "I did not observe whether the clerks had had my sister's guitar put in our little cabin, or whether it was packed away somewhere else. If it is where it can be conveniently got at, it may help to while away the hours of our stretch across the lake to-morrow."

"I will see that it is in readiness," said the bourgeois, cheerfully; "and I will give orders for carrying out the plans for extra dispatch to-morrow."

It was something of a disappointment to the young man to be compelled thus to expedite matters, for, truth to tell, he was in no hurry to get to the end of his journey. As things stood, however, there seemed no alternative.

Miss McGregor, for her part, congratulated herself on having carried her point so easily. "I should not have liked," she said, "to have had recourse to my last weapon —a hint that I know all that is going on. He seems to me the sort of person who might brave me and incite Madeleine to do the same. Ah! it will be a tangled web that I shall have to unravel before I get to the end! But what matters it, if I but save *him*?"

The voyage across the beautiful Winnebago Lake and past its lovely islands was not all that the travellers had hoped for. The wind had risen during the night, and, as Moa-way had predicted, it was from a quarter that hindered rather than aided their progress. The men hoisted

their sails, which did not help to steady the boats. "La Vierge,"* whom the men, with scant ceremony, vociferously called upon to set matters right, seemed, as old Michaud irreverently remarked to his next neighbor, in a particularly disobliging humor. The morning was chilly and damp—quite unlike the genial weather the party had been thus far favored with.

To add to Miss McGregor's discomfort, it was communicated to her by Moa-way that a canoe had come stealthily over in the gray of the morning from Four-Legs' village to warn her that the military were pressing vigorously their passage of the rapids and chûtes, and that they were likely to overtake the Company's boats after they should once get into smooth water.

It was not Four-Legs himself who had sent the news—he, the selfish rogue, was too anxious to keep well with his Great Father at Washington (now that he knew that sword and bayonet were at his heels), to have thus given a spur to those who were acting in disobedience of Government orders. It was little Madame Four-Legs, who had dispatched to Moa-way the same Menomonee runner from whom she had received these tidings, and who now added to them the information that the commanding officer was in a towering passion at finding that the McGregor boats were getting beyond his reach and into the Winnebago country.

It was of the utmost importance, Monica felt, to keep this last piece of information from the bourgeois. She was certain that his good judgment would revolt at the idea of putting himself into an attitude of rebellion to constituted authority. He must not suspect that he was doing more than securing quietness and comfort for the ladies under

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* The Virgin Mary.

his charge, at their evening encampments. As the success of her scheme depended on her keeping the young man entirely at her command, she simply apprised him that the forces under Colonel Bentley were making, as she had learned, rapid progress in their rear; she then crushed down her feelings of impatience and anxiety, and with a tranquil mien sang duet after duet with her sister, to the accompaniment of the guitar, and even made choice occasionally of songs in which Logan could be invited to bear a part.

Nor was this all. She took care not to see the solicitous efforts of the latter to shield her sister from the cold wind as it would make itself felt occasionally through the cracks of the canvas curtains, which they were now obliged to let down for the shelter of the little cabin. The manner in which he heaped up articles of luggage as a barrier, and ransacked for cloaks and wrappings for Madeleine's protection, elicited no comment save a grateful smile or a nod of thanks; and Monica prudently made herself entirely deaf to the tender inflections of his voice as he would express fears lest her sister should be incommoded by some source of discomfort over which he had no control.

"I cannot help it," was still her cry. "I will do penance —I am ready to suffer."

What her sister and the young bourgeois were to suffer through her means, how she was to atone to them, she did not pause to consider. Compared with what she hoped to accomplish through their aid, all the woe that might be wrought for them was as dust in the balance.

The boats reached the farther shore of the lake in good season, entering again the river of which this sheet of water is merely an expanse. A very short pull farther, and they were floating over the clear, tranquil waters of Butte des Morts Lake.

"Kien, Madame Betty Moore! Comment va la vieille?"* shouted old Michaud, waving his *bonnet rouge* in the direction of a rising ground at the right.

"And where does that old lady live?" a *mangeur de lard* ventured to inquire.

"Oh, just over there in that splendid château, with the tower and the chime of bells to call the people to her feasts, and with the gold ornaments hanging down from the roof that you may go and pick and fill your pockets with," said Michaud, pointing to the old battered frame of a lodge, which, like a dirty skeleton keeping guard over an ash-heap, marked the place of a deserted Indian encampment.

Poor Gorbeil, who had once before been sent on a fool's errand at Seul Choix, and wandered for an uncomfortable length of time in the woods in search of the farm-house and cows which were to furnish a pleasant addition to the evening meal of the mischievous crews, hung his head in shame and busied himself with his row-lock, while the bourgeois shouted, "Whoop-là! arrive! arrive! scie, scie à la gauche!"† and the boat was run in at the spot where they were to deposit the Ottawa for his journey across the country—no one but himself and Miss McGregor knew upon what errand.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ALONG the serpentine mazes of the Fox River, in traversing which so much time is consumed while yet so little actual progress is made, the travellers pursued their way,

* How does the old lady do?

† Back water on the left.

without again receiving a hint of the whereabouts of the little squadron of the commanding officer, Monica, as ever, feverish and impatient—the bourgeois and Madeleine in the full glow of contentment, not caring, apparently, whether it were two weeks instead of two days that must intervene before they reached Lake Puckaway.

They reached it at last. Thanks to the urgency of Miss McGregor, they were there early on the second afternoon after leaving Butte des Morts Lake.

"I suppose we do not go further until to-morrow," Miss McGregor remarked to the bourgeois as they drew near the usual camping-ground on the shore of the sluggish, green, rush-covered lake.

"Oh, yes—I see nothing to detain us. We will push on to Lac des Bœufs after the men have smoked their pipes."

"My advice is to remain here. I have reason to believe that *the Walking Mat* has his lodge at Lac des Bœufs; and we know that he is not too friendly to the Americans."

Poor Mau-zhay-mau-nee! the most quiet and peaceful among all the bands of the Ho-tshung-rahs!

"If we are likely to come upon unfriendly Indians," said the young man, "that alters the case. I will talk with Michaud about it." And Michaud, fully alive to the charms of a kettle of corn soup, for which delicacy pork and baker's bread formed, in his estimation, a very poor substitute, was quite willing to be afraid of the Walking Mat, or any other thing that walked, so that he could boil his kettle and make ready his favorite dish.

"Still, we must not forget that we are in danger of being overtaken by the commanding officer and his party," said Miss McGregor. "We shall have an uncomfortable reckoning together, I doubt not, unless we get across the Portage and over into the Wisconsin before he pounces upon

us. I would recommend to you to have the men go to their rest at as early an hour as possible, that they may be roused with the dawn. Do we encamp on shore, or will it be most prudent to come on board again after we have taken our supper, and so sleep in the boats?"

"I prefer that the men should not be crowded together and cramped through the night—they are more fit for service after having had plenty of room to turn and stretch themselves in during their sleep. If you think the band of Indians you spoke of are likely to be troublesome (for, of course, they know perfectly well of our whereabouts), I can have out half a dozen pickets. I shall myself keep watch, at all events."

This was not what Miss McGregor wanted.

"I have no such idea," she said, earnestly. "If we were to thrust ourselves into the midst of Mau-zhay-maunee's lodges, I would not, of course, answer for the security of our valuable property. But *the Mat* is not such a *walker* as to travel a dozen miles in the night for the pleasure of carrying back on his shoulders the booty he might filch. No; have all safely slumbering at as early an hour as possible, and I will be surety for the quiet and safety of all things under our care."

The weather had changed again, and the evening was mild and delightful. The vast expanse of rushes, whence the lake derives its name, is a home for such myriads of mosquitoes that, even when the summer is past, they continue to be tormenting. Logan had, therefore, brought from the boat the large mosquito-bar, and, with Michaud's help, slung it to the trees which overshadowed the spot where the young ladies could most pleasantly take their evening meal. The mats were spread within it for a carpet, and sundry small boxes did duty as seats and side-tables. Miss McGregor was restless—more so than her

sister had ever seen her before. She wandered about the camping-ground, now talking with Michaud, anon questioning the clerks, then exchanging short phrases with M. Tremblay. She would not remain still, to give her sister or the bourgeois an opportunity of remarking the agitation she could not entirely control.

"I shall see him again! Two hours after the moon rises I shall see him again!" was the thought uppermost in her mind, and it gave a light to her eye and a brilliancy to her cheek which at length drew forth a remark from the bourgeois, as he stood brushing away, with a bough of wild laurustinus, the mosquitoes which buzzed around Madeleine and her sketch-book.

"How beautiful your sister is! I never saw that excited, almost spiritual look in her countenance before this evening."

Madeleine's gaze rested for a few minutes upon her.

"Monica is ill at ease," she said. "She is under the influence of some strong emotion—not an unhappy one, that is evident. I should rather say she is expecting some good news, though of what nature it is difficult to conjecture."

Logan bent forward and whispered a few hurried words. Madeleine blushed, and a sweet smile played for a moment around her mouth; but she made no reply, for her sister was approaching, and almost immediately the smoking, savory meal, which stood in place of both dinner and tea, was brought and duly arranged under the mosquito-bar.

"Saint Baptême!" exclaimed old Michaud, testily, as he dashed something less than a handful of tormenting little insects out of his eyes and nose, and in so doing came near upsetting the tin coffee-pot he was cautiously introducing under the muslin hanging. "Pourquoi le démon

ne garde-t-il pas ces maudites bêtes pour piquer les hérétiques là-bas !"*

"Take care, Michaud," said the bourgeois. "What is that you are saying?"

"Seulement un petit mot, 'ienque pour badiner,"† said Michaud, scuffling away, greatly disconcerted at having thus forgotten himself.

After the meal was over, and as Madeleine, seated within the airy walls of her little citadel, was watching the last rays of departing day which still lingered on the tops of the noble old forest trees, her sister, who had again restlessly wandered first in one direction, then in another, came in again under the mosquito-bar.

"It is the best plan for us to sleep in the boat to-night," she said, in a low voice, "and I ask it as a favor of you that you will retire early, and make no comment on what I may do. I tell you, in perfect confidence, that I expect Moa-way to meet me in the neighborhood of the camp to-night, to let me know whether it is perfectly safe for us to push on to the Portage without the escort of the military. I do not let this be known to anybody but you, for we all understand what cowards these Canadians are. If they take a panic they are just as likely to desert the boats and take to the woods, by way of fleeing from the natives, as anything else. And though the bourgeois is doubtless as brave as a lion, still he is new to these people; and, feeling the responsibility of his position, he may think it his duty to lag behind and wait for the soldiers and their volunteer allies, when there is not, in fact, the slightest occasion for it."

"Do you think, really and truly, Monica, that we are

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* Why does not the devil keep these cursed beasts to sting the heretics down below?

† Only a little word by way of a joke.

quite safe?" asked her sister, with an apprehensive look. "What if the savages—I mean the Puans—should have got intelligence of our being so near them, and have combined to fall on us and get possession of the guns and powder we are carrying, or perhaps even plotted to commit some more dreadful act? We are only, they tell me, about twenty miles now from the Portage, where so many are assembled. I cannot forget poor Gagnier and that dreadful Red Bird—I must call him so, though he is our cousin."

Madeleine, whose fears had been suddenly aroused by the words no less than the mysterious deportment of her sister, was as pale as death; her lips trembled as she conjured up a picture of the horrors that might be impending over her. Miss McGregor stifled the anger which her sister's epithet inspired. Calmness was necessary to avert suspicion, for Madeleine was, as she was aware, tolerably penetrating.

"I have no idea that there is the slightest danger," she said, "but it is to assure myself of the facts, so that if it is positively safe we may hurry on and keep out of the way of this motley crew who are following us, that I am anxious to seek information from Moa-way."

"But what is to prevent Moa-way's coming here and giving all the information he possesses to the bourgeois and the rest of us, in the light of day? He is not, as a general thing, particularly diffident."

Miss McGregor's answer was given a little pettishly.

"Well, Madeleine, you may know a good deal more of Indian character and habits than I do—probably that is the case—but, with the light I have, I am inclined to think it safest to comply with the conditions they impose when we are seeking service at their hands. Therefore, since Moa-way prefers to confide his tidings, whatever they may

be, to me alone, rather than to the whole company of clerks and engagés, with young—" she checked herself—"I hope soon to be in possession of the most encouraging news, and I shall lose no time in imparting it to Mr. Logan for his guidance. All you have to do is, to say you prefer to sleep in the boat, and to retire with as little delay as possible—that is, if you care to oblige me."

"Which I certainly do," replied her sister; "but I could not say I preferred sleeping in the boat, except as a matter of prudence, for I should love dearly to lie in our little tent on this rising ground, with just a bit of the canvas drawn aside, so that I could look out upon the beautiful moonlight."

"Monsieur," said Miss McGregor, as their gallant friend just now made his appearance, "will you call the people, if you please, to come and arrange a sleeping-place in the boat for my sister and myself? After these long, warm days, and with an early start to-morrow in view, I suppose we shall all be ready at once to wish each other a good repose."

"Oh, yes—*certainement*—and den shut our eyes and dream of our wives and leetle shildren, isn't it? What happiness! But, ah! I forget—you young ladies not married—you got no wife to dream about—yet."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

How Miss McGregor contrived to step over the side of the boat and slip away from it without being observed, her sister could not comprehend. That she had done it was evident, for when Madeleine awakened from a doze which she had not the slightest intention of falling into, and addressed her sister in a low tone, she received no answer. She put forth her hand to the place where she had left her sitting—Monica was not there. She raised the oil-cloth curtain and let in a flood of moonlight. Except herself, there was no living soul in the cabin.

"It cannot take her long to hear all that Moa-way has to tell," she thought. "She will be back presently, I dare say. I wish I knew whether she is thrusting herself into any danger. She feels so sufficient for her own protection always! I will keep awake, and, if she is not back soon, I shall rouse somebody to look for her."

In conformity with which resolution, she soon fell into a quiet slumber from the very effort of straining her attention to catch the slightest sound.

Miss McGregor's exit from the cabin had been made as only those of her own blood know how to steal away; and practised ears like hers would alone have detected the light dip of a paddle at no great distance, warning her that Moa-way was awaiting her. She was aware that the bourgeois was seated in the bow of the boat, watching; but she was equally certain that the Ottawa had perceived him and would take his measures accordingly—that he would be at the stern of the boat, in deep shadow. Enveloping

herself quietly in a large, dark shawl in the fashion of the couverte* of her people, she quitted the cabin, and, with Moa-way's assistance, gained the canoe which was waiting for her.

The sound of the water lapping against the sides of the boat was hardly as great as would have followed the plunge of a musk-rat setting forth on its nocturnal rambles. It did not attract the attention of the bourgeois, it not being from the side towards the water that he would have looked for any marauder.

With his hands rather than with his paddle, Moa-way guided his little bark along the shadowy path under the sterns of the different boats which lay side by side moored to the shore, until projecting shrubs and tufts of alders completely sheltered him from view of any inquisitive eye; then, giving full play first to his right arm, then to his left, in less than a quarter of an hour he had carried Miss McGregor to a spot where the dense forest which bordered the lake opened into a small glade lying bare and bright in the moonlight.

Miss McGregor rose up from the spot where she had sat crouched in the end of the canoe. She trembled so that she needed Moa-way's hand to help her to step on shore. For a moment she stood to recover herself. She looked around, but without asking a question. Moa-way waved his hand towards a clump of trees standing detached from the rest at a little distance.

She went forward alone. Some one stood in the shadow. She could not have mistaken the upright, majestic form of the Red Bird, even had she not been greeted with the soft accent, "Española!" and felt her hands clasped in his, as he drew her towards him. She bowed her head upon his arm, and for a time wept unrestrainedly.

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* Indian blanket.

His strong frame shook with emotion, but he made no effort to speak till he could do so with some degree of composure; then he repeated her name.

"Española—look up. Tell me why you are come. Tell me if anything but your own good heart, your own tender sympathy for your unhappy friend, has dictated this visit."

"I come, Wau-nig-sootsh-kah," said Monica, as soon as she could sufficiently repress the sobs which at first rendered her speech inarticulate, "I come to speak with you—to save you. I feared you would, in your despair, throw away your precious life, or else that our people, intimidated by the threats and awed by the power of the Big Knives, might be so weak, so abject, as to sacrifice you for the sake of their own safety. I have come to counsel with you as to what is best, or rather what is possible, to be done in this cruel conjuncture of affairs."

"Why should anything be done, Española-nee-grah?* To what purpose should we scheme and plan? You have heard of the solemn council at the Butte des Morts. The Great Father demands my life. Why should he not have it? Our people have had blood—the blood of the innocent and helpless. Why should the Ho-tshung-rahs refuse to pay their debt?"

"But why, oh, why, Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, should they pay it with your precious life? Why do they not rather seek that of the guilty parties? *You* are innocent—*you* shed no blood!"

The Red Bird clasped her hands in his more closely still, and pressed them against his heart.

Again she repeated, in a tone of agony, "*You* shed no blood—you are not a murderer!"

"I was with them," he answered, gloomily. "I led the party—I saw it done."

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* A diminutive of endearment.

"Still, if there must be punishment, let it fall on the perpetrators of the inhuman act—on Wee-kau, and the other one—there was another,—he who shot the discharged soldier. Let him be given over to justice; but not you, Wau-nig-sootsh-kah—not you. My heart tells me—it told me from the first—that you were innocent—that you were incapable of such an act. Will the chiefs of our nation be so base as to give you up to the Big Knives?"

"They will not give me up, Española."

"Will they stand by and let the Government soldiers seize you?"

"No, they will not suffer me to be seized."

"Then you are safe!" cried Monica, in joyful accents; "they will protect and defend you. That is the morning light which is to chase away the darkness, as you sent me word by Moa-way. Tell me," she cried, "is that the meaning of your words—that you are to be safe?"

Wau-nig-sootsh-kah did not immediately reply, but after a little space he said,—

"My meaning was, that my people and my country—if we have yet a country—shall not suffer through me. No dark cloud, presaging bloodshed and rapine, shall hang over them for my sake."

"But you will not remain among them? The chiefs may change their brave resolves. Great temptations may corrupt them. You will go and dwell among another people? That is what you must do—that is best. You shall cross the Mississippi, and find an asylum among the Omahas. The brave and good Mahaskah will make you welcome and protect you. In time all will be forgotten. I will give the wife of Gagnier the means of living comfortably. All my share of our annuity money she shall have, year by year, for the support of herself and her child. I will go and see her as soon as I get back to the Prairie.

I will tell her how grieved you are for what has happened —that she must forgive you for not having been prompt enough to prevent it. It was said that she charged you with her husband's death; but she will acknowledge her mistake; she will remember that the gun she snatched from Wee-kau was the one that had taken her husband's life—that she tried to fire it off, but could not, because it had been already discharged. That shows that it was Wee-kau who did the deed. I shall take care, Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, that she does not curse you, but forgives you. When you have been a few years among the Omahas or Otoes, you can return, and all will be peace and comfort again."

Monica pleaded with earnest rapidity; she did not stop for an objection.

"Come to my heart, and be to me what only you can be, for the little time that remains," said the Red Bird, in accents of deep emotion, as, loosing one hand from her clasp, he threw his arm around her.

"Oh, no, no! alas! no," cried Monica, drawing away from him. "That is not permitted—it cannot be. In the happy days so long past, I dreamed that your bosom might be my home; but, ah! that dream was chased away by my father's decree—by my mother's counsel. It can return no more. You have chosen another—to her you belong. You are consecrated; set apart from me except as a friend —a brother."

"If your heart had been like mine, you would not have listened to father or mother," said the Red Bird, reproachfully. "What right had they to condemn us to a life of misery?"

"But you have not been miserable, Wau-nig-sootsh-kah. You took a wife to make you happy in my stead."

"And why did I take a wife? Because your mother

came herself to tell me that you would never know peace of mind till you heard that I was consoled. I had thought to live single in my lodge, the laughing-stock of all my tribe, who would have said, 'See Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, the old bachelor! He has no woman to make his moccasins, or to bring his meat home from the chase, or to cook his supper when he comes from his journey tired and hungry!' But when I knew it was to purchase peace of mind for you, I took Way-noo-nah,* the daughter of Tshah-nee-kah,† and went to live with her in her father's lodge."

"And you were happy with her, Wau-nig-sootsh-kah?" said Monica, with a sob. "It was better it should be so."

"Does Española ask me if I was happy? Is the deer happy that carries ever the barbed arrow of the hunter in its side? No; I was not happy. Way-noo-nah was not happy. She had no children—she was devoured by discontent. She upbraided me that I did not love her—that my heart was another's; she complained of the hardships of her lot. Then I brought another wife to wait on her, that she might live at ease. I gave her all the silver that I got at the payment, all the skins and furs that I brought home from the chase; but I could not buy happiness for her. She reproached me with tears, and said, 'You love the Big Knives better than you love your own people. My brother was killed by them on the Upper Mississippi, and no scalps have been taken to wave over his grave! If you do not really hate me, go with—with those who belong to me, and *take some meat.*'"‡

"Ah!" said Miss McGregor, eagerly, "then it was your wife's father or brother who shot Gagnier! He was the third Indian!"

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* The Spring. † The Autumn.

‡ Take the lives of our enemies.

"The wife of Gagnier says it was my gun that she heard click—let it be so."

"No, no, Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, we will not let it be so. You must not bear the charge of murder unjustly. Let him who did the deed answer for it."

"Whoever fired the shot did it to avenge his own slaughtered friends. Did the Government ever punish those who committed the outrages up near St. Peter's? If not, why should they ask the privilege of punishing us?"

"Alas! Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, the question is not what the Government ought to do, but what it has the power to do. It can visit on you the penalty of this deed, and it will do so, if you allow yourself to remain within its reach. Do not, do not, I entreat you, run any risk by delay. Fly at once to the Omaha, or even to the Yankton country. By the morning's dawn you can be far, far away. Let us part now, and at some future time—years hence, perhaps——"

Miss McGregor could not proceed.

"What then, Española?" asked the Red Bird, in an agitated tone.

"All will be forgotten, and you may come back again to your friends and to the graves of your fathers."

"And is that all? Is that," he said, bitterly, "the hope Española would hold out to me as the reward for slinking away like a wolf who has committed a trespass?"

"Oh, Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, what *can* I say? How can I move you to save yourself from death, or from a captivity which to you would be a thousandfold worse than death? I know full well that you could march up to their rifles baring your breast and bidding them to fire. But to be fettered, chained, to be thrust into a dungeon, to lie in darkness and solitude for long months before you are granted the grace of even defending yourself——"

A shudder passed over the frame of the young chief.

"Irons? Chains? They would never treat a man, their equal, in that manner! It is only the mean, the cowardly, the liars, that need fetters."

"They would! they would, *Koa-rah-nee-grah!** Do not trust them. Fly, fly, while you have yet time. The eagle may make his escape from the hunter, rather than be tied to a stake, an object for each child to throw a stick at."

The Red Bird seemed to hesitate. His proud bearing softened by degrees; he drooped his head nearer to Monica, and whispered, in accents of passionate tenderness,—

"Española's heart is mine. Will she fly with me? Can she ask me to walk desolate and alone in a far-distant land, thinking of her, longing for her, dying for her? Better to yield life at once by the hand of the May-ee-hat-tee-rah,† if she says no to my prayer."

"Oh, Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, do you forget the precepts of the religion in which I have been reared? I have ere now explained to you the stern decrees which forbid our union. That way we must not, dare not look. Think of your wife!"

"I have no wife, Española-nee-grah. Way-noo-nah has left me—has returned to the lodge of her father. I have given her all my earthly possessions save my chief's robe of ceremony. Shall I, arrayed in that, clasp my beloved in my arms, and then accept exile and life with her? Say it shall be so, darling. What would not Wau-nig-sootsh-kah give up if Española pleaded to him with the voice of loving entreaty?"

Again he attempted to draw her to his heart, but again she released herself; yet she still held his hand, and, press-

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* Dear friend. † Big Knives, or Americans.

ing it again and again to her lips, said, in broken accents,—

"Koa-rah, Koa-rah-nee-grah, listen to Española—let her plead, since Wau-nig-sootsh-kah boasts that he would give up all things for her sake. For *my* sake, then, tempt me no more to leave my Church—my God——" The Red Bird interrupted her.

"Your God? Do we not worship the same Great Spirit, Española—the Maker of all things—the preserver of all men? Do we not both look forward to the happiness he has provided for us beyond the grave, when this troublous life shall be no more?"

"Ah, Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, of what avail to go over again the grounds we have argued with one another so often? You cannot accept my faith, and I must not peril my soul by casting in my lot with one who rejects it. Do you think I feel nothing when I tell you this?" she said, in a voice of anguish. "Look into your own heart—it is the mirror of mine. In proof of it, let me swear to you that, though I must not be yours, I will never be another's. Whenever you think of Española, say to yourself that she is loving you, praying for you, waiting for the blessed hereafter with you. Will you be content with that, Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, and ask no more?"

"I will be a man," said the Red Bird, drawing himself up and raising his head so that the moonbeams fell on his noble countenance. "Española was the sunshine of my early days; clouds gathered, and my path has long been gloomy and overcast. What matter if the thick darkness comes at last and shuts out all? Wau-nig-sootsh-kah can lay him down to that sleep in which all deluding dreams are forgotten."

Miss McGregor, who had continued to weep bitterly, spoke in alarm:—

"But Wau-nig-sootsh-kah will live for Española's sake, as she will live to remember him. He will go to Mahaskah, as he has promised."

"Whatever Wau-nig-sootsh-kah promises he will perform," said the chief, firmly. "Española must be comforted. She must make no rash vows. Who can tell if that which they resolve at night will seem the path of wisdom when pondered in the light of morning? If we must indeed part now," observing that she was gathering her shawl about her, "let us part as loving friends. In the beautiful lands beyond the great western flood the friends who are now separated will one day discourse of all that is past, without reproaches and without tears."

He pressed her hands fervently between his own, gathered them for a moment to his breast, and then turned and disappeared from her view, almost before she could utter an exclamation.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

MADELEINE'S slumber was of that light, dozing kind which we take when we have something on our minds that forbids settled sleep. After a time she roused up fully, vexed at herself for her transient drowsiness. She looked abroad. The moon was high up in the sky. It had travelled far past the end of the boat, against which its rays were falling when she last took an observation.

"Where can Monica be?" she said to herself. "What can Moa-way have to say to her all this time? It surely would not be necessary for her to go very far from the boats to get out of ear-shot! I suppose it is absurd in me to feel alarmed about her," she said, by way of arguing

herself out of a fit of trembling; "I dare say it is not so very late."

She felt for her watch, and looked at it in the bright moonlight. "Half-past one! Good Heavens, what can it mean? Something must have happened to her! Moaway—can he have proved faithless? Oh, dear! oh, dear! why would she trust him? But, then, if anything had attacked her would she not have shrieked out? She could not have gone to a great distance to listen to what Moaway had to tell her. I will wait a quarter of an hour; then, if she does not come, I will give the alarm and have her hunted for."

She took off her cap, smoothed her hair, and, throwing a shawl over the chintz dressing-gown in which she had wrapped herself before lying down, she sat quietly upon the side of the commodious divan which had been constructed of trunks and mattresses, and listened for the sound of her sister's returning footsteps. In her anxiety she drew forth her watch again and again, to see whether her quarter of an hour had expired. "I don't know why I should wait," she said; "only Monica, if she is, after all, close at hand, will be so annoyed if I make a fuss!"

When the fifteen minutes had passed, she could restrain her impatience no longer. She parted the curtains which screened the little cabin from the bow of the boat, in doubt what step to take. She saw no tent pitched on the shore, and she had no idea in which boat the bourgeois had taken up his quarters. An instinctive feeling, however, whispered that he would not be far distant from the one in which she was reposing.

"He will think it so strange and childish in me to wake him out of his sleep," she said; "and Monica—will she regard it as a breach of confidence, seeing that she imparted to me her intention?"

A low sound, which her fears magnified into the growl of a catamount at the very least, put to flight all her scruples. Hardly knowing what she did, she put forth her head, and called,—

"Mark! Mark! come to me."

Logan started up. He was seated on the mess-basket, not two feet from her.

"What is it?" he cried, springing to her side. "What has happened? What will you have?"

"Oh, I didn't know you were there—I am so glad!" she said, as he soothingly repeated his inquiries. "I am so frightened about Monica. It is nearly two o'clock, and she has not come back yet."

"Not come back! Why, where has she gone? What, in the name of all that is wonderful, can have taken her abroad at this hour and in the present state of things? She is certainly out of her senses!"

"That is a question that she alone can answer—why she went. But she is not crazy. She told me she was going to hold a quiet conference with Moa-way, the Ottawa."

"And you believed her?" said Logan, with an arch look. "No, dear, it was not to confer with Moa-way, depend upon it. Your sister has some deeper plan than that."

"Oh, then she may be in the greatest danger. Dear Mark, rouse up the men—let them scour the woods—and do you go too—no—you had better stay—somebody must stay, you know, to see after the cargoes——"

"Your sister is perfectly safe, my dearest, depend upon that. I spoke unguardedly. She, of course, knows her own people and feels that she can trust them."

"But, Mark, there may be wild beasts. I heard such an awful sound just now—there it is again! Come quite close here and listen!"

"Yes," said Logan, laughing. "Don't think me unfeel-

ing, darling; I had my quarters next to our good friend M. Tremblay last night, and I recognize his bassoon. It will not devour us."

"Oh, how silly I am! But still, about Monica. Suppose you take some of the men and go just to the edge of the woods—not out of sight, you know. You can call to her; and if she answers you, then all is right."

"Your sister might not relish such a procedure on our part. She is somewhat tenacious, I observe. Sit down, now, and let us discuss the subject"—which they did, Logan bringing so much good sense to bear upon the question that Madeleine's fears vanished, and she sat very patiently by the open curtain, with Mark on the other side, yet sufficiently near to act as protector should even a mosquito make a demonstration towards her fair face.

"There was another thing I wanted to speak to you about, Mark," said Madeleine. "I have always been troubled with a fear that papa did not get those letters we sent him the day we went to the Kakalin. After Moa-way returned that time, when I was so impatient for papa's answer and so anxious to hear all about him, Monica told me frankly that he did not go to the Prairie,—which I thought very strange, for I had seen her take what looked like quite a large sum of silver from a canvas bag and give him, when he was about to set off. Monica said he only went as far as the Portage, and from there sent the letter to the Prairie by another Indian. Now, if after being paid so liberally on that occasion he failed to fulfil his engagement, it seems strange to me that Monica should trust him again. I would not."

"Hadn't you better let down the curtain and come to rest again, Madeleine?" said the calm, gentle voice of her sister, close behind her. Madeleine started, with an exclamation that was almost a scream.

"Oh, Monica, dear, have you come at last? I was getting so frightened about you; but Mar—Mr. Logan said there was no need, that you were safe——"

"And you see he was right. Good-night, Mr. Logan. Thank you very much for keeping watch over my sister,—rallying her courage, I should rather say, since there was nothing to keep watch against."

The bourgeois had by this time unlocked the cover of the mess-basket and brought from within it a bottle of wine. His quick ear had detected that Miss McGregor's voice was sad, and also that she was shivering, whether with cold or with emotion he could not tell.

"Will it not be most prudent, madame, for you to take a little wine after your exposure to the night-air?"

"Thank you, yes," she said, almost seizing it; "I will, indeed—it is best." And as she drank it her teeth chattered against the glass. Logan had filled another glass and, without a word, handed it to Madeleine She tasted it as if it were a matter of obedience, but quickly handed it back to him, and turned to her sister.

"Oh, Monica, you have heard some bad news—you are trembling. Have you heard from home? Has anything happened?"

"No, no, I have heard nothing; all is going on well. Do not distress yourself, my dear; Moa-way brought only good news."

"For all that, something has happened to grieve her; she would never speak to me so tenderly if her own heart were not suffering," said Madeleine to herself. "Something that has befallen or is about to befall her people. Her heart is so bound up in them!"

And the bourgeois made very much the same reflections as he drew down the canvas curtain and carefully fastened it at the sides to exclude the western breeze.

His suspicions were not dissipated when Miss McGregor, in bidding him good-night, added,—

"Upon the whole, Mr. Logan, I do not think there is any particular occasion for rousing the men so very early to-morrow. You all require rest, and so, perhaps, do Madeleine and I."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

WHETHER Miss McGregor slept after the excitement and emotion of the last few hours, she alone could tell. Madeleine, her mind relieved from anxiety, soon sank into a slumber, from which she was, after a time, awakened by sounds which had, for a little time previous, mingled with her dreams.

She had fancied herself witnessing a scalp-dance on the lawn before her father's house, and that from one of the horrid trophies which was brandished under the very window where she sat, she saw streaming the long, soft, dark hair of a woman, tied with the cherry-colored ribbon that Monica had been accustomed to wear around her neck. She thought the tall, handsome savage who bore it, as he approached her, gave a whoop—the fierce, thrilling scalp-whoop, which she had occasionally, though rarely, heard in her childhood.

She started up in terror. Her dream was partially reality—there were whoops and yells in the air; there were voices calling from a distance, and answered by others close at hand.

Monica was not in the little cabin. Madeleine threw up the side curtain and looked out, forgetful of nightcap or any other disarray. The little lake was covered with

boats—a perfect fleet, in full career towards the place where their own lay moored. The rays of the early sun glittered on streamers and bayonets as well as on the waves which rippled in the light morning breeze. The barge of the commanding officer, with the United States flag flying at its prow, wss followed by a long array of Mackinac and Durham boats, filled, some with regulars, others with militia or Waubanakees, and by canoes bearing the Menomonee allies, now paddling in the rear, now darting here and there, at the caprice of their navigators.

The arrangement of her toilet was the work of a very few minutes, and Madeleine was outside, standing on one of the thwarts, beside her sister and the bourgeois, all awaiting the first salutation of Colonel Bentley.

Miss McGregor was in doubt whether the greeting of this dignitary would be courteous or reproachful; she suspected, the latter.

The colonel was standing erect in his barge as it drew near. He lifted his shako to the ladies and bowed, but did not smile. His words were addressed to the bourgeois:—

"So, young gentleman, you thought proper to hurry on, and throw your cargo and passengers into the very teeth of danger—danger not to yourselves alone, but perilling the whole country from Fort Howard to Fort Crawford!"

"Allow me to speak in reply, if you please," said Miss McGregor, with a gentle inclination to the commanding officer. "In this matter Mr. Logan has acted entirely under my directions. I took upon myself the office of *bourgeoise* for the time being. I cannot think we were running any special risk when our military protectors were but a few hours behind us—so few that our friend Moaway here could have paddled in his canoe to bring them to our rescue at the very first hint of danger."

She spoke so sweetly, and her manner was so gracious, that the colonel was in a measure disarmed; his voice took a different inflection:—

"Still, madam, I must think you have run a very great risk. It is not the custom of these people to give warning, and put their proposed victims on their guard. In case of a sudden surprise you would have found it very difficult to notify us, even with your red friend's help."

"We are not such poor soldiers as you imagine, sir," she replied, with a smile that more than one of her listeners thought very bewitching; "we did not leave ourselves open to a sudden surprise. Our watch has been most vigilantly kept, I assure you, through this whole night, in which there has been for the first time any real exposure or danger."

"Ah! very well—very well. A watch kept! That was extremely well done. I see you understand the first military principle—prudence; it is even before prowess. But though we may vote you a wreath of laurel, or a medal, which is more fashionable, for having brought your little command safely through a most hazardous position, yet, as matters are, our party will have now, I think, to take the lead, and allow you to follow on at your leisure. Good-morning, madam"—the colonel was, by this time, all smiles and courtesy—"*Au revoir.* By-the-by, we have got a couple of ladies in our train, who, I dare say, will be very happy to lag behind and share your camping-ground out of the reach of our excellent allies there, who naturally are not very much to their taste."

"Any one whom you recommend to our care, sir, shall be very welcome to come with us," said Miss McGregor, in her most obliging tone. Her heart was beating with joy at having reinstated herself in the good graces of the commanding officer, for she said to herself, "He may be in-

duced to deal leniently with the chiefs when he finds that the Red Bird, by his flight across the Mississippi, has put it out of their power to comply with the requisitions of the Government. They can show that it was their design to have delivered him up, but that he has put it out of their power to do so. And Colonel Bentley, if he is in a good humor, will promise them to have their failure overlooked by their Father at Washington."

The hope of being instrumental in such a consummation banished, in some measure, the sadness which had clouded the brow of Miss McGregor, and she was able to receive and return the salutations of the officers of her acquaintance as boat after boat pressed forward.

"Ah! Miss McGregor—delighted to see you looking so charmingly this bright summer morning," cried Captain Lytle. "Summer? No—by Jove! I forgot. September has come. 'How lightly falls the foot of Time!'"—with a slightly sentimental air; then, with sudden recollection, "Not that time has trodden on flowers for the last three weeks——"

"Unless it were water-lilies and folles-avoines,* I suppose," said Miss McGregor, in a careless tone, for she was not well pleased at the present assumption of gallantry on the part of the capricious captain. The latter was so little acquainted with characters like Miss McGregor's that he fancied she spoke in pique, and that perseverance in his assiduities would be all that was wanting to insure smiles in return.

"Water-lilies—yes, as you say, our path was strewed with them. Cold and disconsolate, are they not? Emblems of absence and—and—disappointment—and—but now we shall look for a pathway of roses—fragrant as the

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* The wild rice with which Fox River and the small lakes abound.

memory of the past." The captain spoke rather low, and looked around to make sure that he was unobserved, then heaved a sigh.

"We have no monthly roses on our Western prairies," said the young lady. "Those that blossomed in their season have all died out long ago. It's a fashion they have, whether savage or civilized! Ah! Mr. Hamilton—so you have come to show yourself a hero! Had you a pleasant voyage?" asked Miss McGregor, with an air of kind interest, and quite cutting short her dialogue with Captain Lytle, who scowled and bit his lip to conceal his mortification.

The quartermaster gave a stiff bow, but a gratified smile, as he answered the young lady's inquiry, while Mr. Stafford profited by her amiable greeting to venture a few words of courteous salutation to her sister. The commanding officer was soon ready with the words "Give way, my men!" and his boat shot ahead. Not so that of the younger officers. It was so pleasant to meet the young ladies and enjoy a chat, after days of tedious, uneventful travelling!

"Is Mr. Smithett of your party?" asked Madeleine.

"No, ma'am. We left him to guard the Fort," said Hamilton, dryly. "The adjutant did detail him, at first, to take charge of our Indian allies; but he came to beg off, pleading that as he and the Mee-hom-inys could not understand each other, he should be of no manner of use, and the colonel, probably being of the same opinion, appointed him to another field of service—guarding the ladies in our absence."

"And who are the ladies with you, of whom Colonel Bentley spoke?"

"Old acquaintances, if not old friends," said Mr. Staf-

ford—"our former travelling-companions, Mrs. Smart and Mrs. Hale."

"Indeed! What can they be doing on such an expedition as this?" said Madeleine. "Does Mrs. Smart think she has a *faculty*, as she calls it, for bringing the refractory Winnebagoes to terms? And, of all things, has she brought Mrs. Hale as her coadjutor?"

"I think," said the young officer, "Mrs. Smart's mission has no motive so exalted as her country's good or the peace of her savage brethren. Her husband, who is sutler at Fort Crawford, has quite a large amount of supplies that he is transporting to the post, and he has asked leave to attach himself to our party, with the understanding that he is to *suttle* for us, as his wife calls it, whenever we may find it convenient to call upon him. No alarms of Indian foes could keep madam from accompanying him, for she has got all the pluck of the concern, and I believe thinks that, on occasion, her tongue would effect more than salvos of artillery. She is a wonderful woman, Mrs. Smart, particularly in the item of olfactories."

The gentlemen who had heard the story of the surveying-instruments laughed.

"But I don't understand her object in bringing that pale, distressed-looking Mrs. Hale with her," said Madeleine.

"Smart tells me he has taken the husband for clerk, and they are emigrating, as they call it, to the Prairie."

"Mrs. Smart is a very kind-hearted woman," said Madeleine. "I saw a great deal of her goodness on board the steamer when we travelled together."

"Her goodness to Smart has been unbounded, Captain Lovel tells me," said the quartermaster, gravely.

"Why, he is her husband," said Madeleine. "Are not women, as a general rule, kind to their husbands?"

"We bachelors think that an open question," said Hamilton. "But Mr. Smart was not always his wife's husband. When he was a lieutenant in the army, during the last war, he was a single man. He was in Scott's command, near Niagara; and lying round in the cedar swamps, and months of hard service of a similar kind, besides being wounded at Lundy, knocked him up completely, so that at the reduction of the army, being found useless, he was thrown aside. He was very poor, and an invalid, without the means of earning a copper. He boarded with a little widow in Buffalo, who nursed him and took care of him, and, when he had nothing to settle his bill with, kindly took himself, for pay. If that is not being good to him, I do not know what is."

"He seems active and energetic enough now," said Miss McGregor, joining for the first time in the conversation.

"Of course he is. What man wouldn't feel encouraged with such a helper? To use her own phrase, 'she made General Scott' get a pension for him; and, lately, she has somehow obtained the same influence with the officers of the Fort to get him the post of sutler. It really is as you say, madam—she is kind-hearted, and does lots of good to everybody."

"How I wish there were more such people in the world!" said Madeleine. "I am glad she is coming with us. I hope we shall make her as comfortable as she makes others." Then turning towards Captain Lovel's boat, as it drew near, she cried, "Oh, captain, if you had only brought Grace with you! Wouldn't she have enjoyed this trip?"

"I cannot pronounce, my dear young lady, till we get to the end of it. I haven't begun to see the beauties of it myself, yet. I dare say Miss Latimer would have been as ready as any of her sex to go out on the war-path, but, upon the whole, I am not sorry she has limited her heroic

exploits to conquests nearer home. Excuse me, Ewing—did you remark anything?"

"Only," said Mr. Ewing, looking a little conscious, "to ask you to give me a moment's opportunity of paying my respects to the young ladies."

"Oh, certainly; say all you've got to say, and then let's be off. Our colonel is in a devil of a hurry—I'm sure I can't imagine why. I don't suppose all the break-jaw old fellows at the Portage—all the Hee-nook-ah-rah-took-shun-neek-hee-noos—are going to vanish into thin air before we get up to them. As for their floating down the Wisconsin, I take it Atkinson's command has by this time dammed that stream up for them pretty effectually. We shall find them all there at the Portage, I'll bet—the handsome Mr. Red Bird and all the other knights of the tomahawk—waiting for us."

"God forbid!" said Miss McGregor to herself, with almost a groan. "Oh! if I could but know certainly that he was away on the road to Mahaskah and his braves, I could bear with patience, with gladness, whatever trial might be laid upon me!"

CHAPTER XL.

THE boats pulled away, one after another, in obedience to the word of command, the Menomonees whooping, yelling, and vying with each other in the fleetness with which they would cause their canoes to shoot forward among and around the larger craft, as if in derision of their sluggishness.

The boat in which were Mrs. Smart with Mrs. Hale and

her children had dropped behind. Earnest were the hand-shakings and voluble were the outpourings of gratitude with which the first-mentioned lady acknowledged the favor of being allowed to "cast in her lot," as she expressed it, with the two sisters and their suite.

"You see, we have got everything as nice as need be, in our own boat,—all sorts of little delicacies and kick-shaws, such as a sutler is sure to provide his wife with; and we needn't make you a morsel of trouble. But the fact is, Smart likes to keep close to the commanding officer and the rest of them, as it's right he should. Talk about your quartermasters, and about your soldiers being contented with soldier's fare! I tell you what, let an officer be as good a soldier as he may, he likes to have the sutler round," with a wink, and puckering her mouth into a laugh. "So my husband and I concluded that the best plan would be for him to have an extra boat, well packed with all such things as the officers would be likely to want, and for him and Hale to keep pretty much along with them all the time. As he paid the sutler at Fort Howard a handsome sum for the privilege of suttling for the command on this trip, I didn't want him to lose money, so I undertook to take care of myself and not be a morsel of hindrance to him. That's the way of it; and Colonel Bentley, who is an old army comrade of my husband's, he engaged to speak to you and your sister about it. I hope you don't think I've been a pushing myself too forward in asking the privilege."

Miss McGregor, with more cordiality of manner than she was in the habit of manifesting, made Mrs. Smart welcome, which so delighted the good lady that she forthwith plunged still deeper into explanations of Smart's position and affairs, winding up with some sage aphorisms in the following form:—

"So, I said, what's the use of hanging fire? Go ahead

and take the business, if it's to bring you in anything. Don't be squeamish. Remember, a man is respected for what he holds on to, not for what he lets slip through his fingers. As for the officers, it's not likely anybody's going to make a fortune out of them. Let them alone for getting the worth of their penny; but, then, a little is better than nothing at all."

Mrs. Hale stood in admiring silence while Mrs. Smart thus wisely expounded. She uttered not a word, but corroborated what her friend advanced with a succession of nods, or applauded a sally that pleased her by an occasional laugh behind her pocket-handkerchief.

"Have you forgotten, ladies, that you have not breakfasted?" said Logan, approaching. "Michaud is in despair lest his venison steaks should be spoiled by delay."

"Venison! where did Michaud light upon such a delicacy?" asked Madeleine.

"He tells me that Moa-way brought in a couple of fine quarters about daybreak, saying that he found them in the woods."

"That is strange. I have heard no guns. Have you heard any, Monica?"

Her sister replied in the negative; yet she knew all the same whose *fusil* had brought down the game, and whose thoughtful care had sent her as large a share as Moa-way could carry on his shoulders.

"You will come and breakfast with us?" said Madeleine to Mrs. Smart and Mrs. Hale.

"Oh, bless your dear little heart," said the former, "I am as much obliged to you as can be, but we had our pork and potatoes at about three o'clock this morning. Not but what we might have had something a little nicer, only plain food is best for the health, and I couldn't afford to have two sick children on my hands while we are travelling.

And let me tell you," lowering her voice, and giving one of her funny little winks, "if you know when you're well off, you'll let us just keep our distance. Them children wouldn't be a side-dish that you'd have much need to covet, if you are anyways particular about behavior."

But, though she declined to join their mess, Mrs. Smart did not feel constrained to refuse the fine venison ham which she found in the hands of her cook. She only insisted on marking her sense of the value of the present by a gift in return of a couple of tumblers of currant jelly and a jar of pickled oysters, "to give," as she said, "a kind of a relish to the other good things."

The country through which their route now carried the travellers was, for the most part, flat and dreary.

Lac des Bœufs, a small sheet of water, had, it is true, pretty picturesque banks, with headlands covered with trees jutting out into the clear waters, and with occasional glades or oak-openings, like beautiful park scenery, in which the deer grazed tranquilly until, disturbed by whoops from the approaching boats, they would bound away into the forest.

Then came an extended level, through which, for miles upon miles, the river trailed its lazy way, by a narrow, serpentine course, through a vast prairie covered with coarse grass already beginning to look sere and brown from the summer's heat. At times the course of the stream was so impeded by the rushes, which grow tall and tough along its bed, that it was only by poling that the boats could be forced along. At rare intervals the current would expand into something like a pond, with surface quite concealed from view by the masses of lilies, whose white or yellow globes were eagerly grasped and drawn on board, spite of their tenacious hold to their beds by stems ten or twelve feet in length.

There could be, of course, but little singing while the voyageurs were making their way in such a tiresome manner. Even old Michaud's occasional lilting up with something humorous, as,—

"Quand j'étais chez mon pè-re,
Peti-te Jean-ne-ton,
J'allais à la fontain-e
Pour pêcher du poisson,"

brought out a very feeble chorus of,—

"La violet-te dan dan-e,
La violet-te dan dan."

With so many causes of perplexing meditation, it was no wonder that the two days spent in this part of their journey seemed inexpressibly long and tedious to the sisters.

"How little like Sunday this day has appeared!" said Madeleine, on the afternoon of the second day. "I have tried to go through the service in the Prayer-Book, but it is so difficult to preserve a devotional feeling when everything around one is going on just as usual, like any other day of the week."

"Yes," assented the bourgeois, to whom, as he sat outside of the little cabin, the remark was addressed. "I was in hopes of being able to give the men a rest to-day,—bodily rest is all they would have appreciated, I suppose,—but the colonel's orders are imperative; we may not lag behind; we must keep close in his wake. It is to be hoped that a breach of the Fourth Commandment will be pardoned, since it is a matter of inexorable necessity. How beautiful some of these hymns are!"

He read first one and then another, from Madeleine's American Prayer-Book, in a low tone, Miss McGregor in the mean time, apparently, taking no notice as she lay

apart upon the divan, motionless, with her head enveloped in her shawl, after the manner of her people when they are either grieved or discontented.

As, however, the young man in going over the index named one hymn, "Vital spark of heavenly flame!" she raised her head and spoke:—

"That is indeed a beautiful one. Madeleine, cannot you sing it? The metre is somewhat irregular and uncommon, but I think you have an air to it which you can accompany with your guitar. Mr. Logan, don't you admire that hymn?"

"As a hymn, I can hardly say that I do," replied the bourgeois. "Is it, in fact, a hymn?"

"A hymn? Certainly. What else?"

"A tender apostrophe, it seems to me, to one's own parting spirit, with an expostulation to the physical frame which is supposed to be detaining it. It is also a poetical and, if you will, a touching description of circumstances which *may*, possibly, attend the passage of the soul to a new state of existence; though, as nothing of the kind has ever been revealed to mortals, the author is wholly indebted to his imagination for the sort of sentimental glory he throws around the solemn hour."

"Oh, Mr. Logan, you astonish me! Do you doubt that there may be a glory and a happiness in such an hour?"

"God forbid! I only express my belief that the 'bliss of dying' is derived, not from the whisperings of sister spirits, but from the consoling presence of One higher than the angels, who has promised to be with us in passing through the dark valley."

"I think that presence is implied in the concluding couplet of the last stanza, 'O grave! where is thy victory? O death! where is thy sting?'"

"It certainly would be, if the poet had gone a little fur-

ther with the text of the apostle, and completed his strain with a paraphrase of the verse, 'Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' As the piece now stands, it contains not one word of recognition of the Deity, neither adoration, nor supplication, nor confession of sin. There is nothing in it that is in the slightest degree devotional; for that reason, I could hardly call it a hymn."

"You seem very well acquainted with the texts to which you allude," said Miss McGreger, in a slightly scoffing tone.

"I ought to be," replied the bourgeois, quietly. "I have heard our burial-service, of which they form a part, often enough to have learned them by heart."

At this moment Miss McGregor sprang to her feet, roused by a cheering shout from old Michaud given at the very top of his lungs,—

"Whoop-là, avance'! avance'! Voilà le Portage!"

There, indeed, was the desired spot, apparently close at hand, yet not to be reached until after many doublings and windings—not, indeed, until the patience of Miss McGregor, at least, was wellnigh exhausted. Slowly and circuitously the boats wound their way, now approaching the little cluster of log cabins and Indian lodges that crowned a rising ground, they seemed just about to reach them—now turning away and shooting in an opposite direction, as if to retrace their course—anon doubling, like a hunted animal—at length arriving at the little promontory which had been selected by the military as their point of debarkation.

The boats of the command lay moored at its foot, and were already vacant of their company of officers and soldiers. The men were toiling up the ascent, laden with all the appliances for an immediate encampment.

Two or three officers were standing upon the bank at the little landing-place, and they eagerly called to the bourgeois and to the ladies, as their boat drew near,—

"Oh, stop! stop! by all means—don't go any farther. Miss McGregor, don't let them carry you and your sister on to Lapierre's. Didn't you observe, as you passed, that the trading-house is surrounded by a perfect horde of Neechees?* You cannot surely think of camping among them?"

"No, that would not be pleasant," said Miss McGregor; "but I rather think Madame Lapierre will find some place under her own roof where she can bestow us."

"Indeed," cried Captain Lovel, "you must not think of such a thing. You know what these little trading-houses are—homes for every dirty or drunken savage; and at a time like this there will be plenty of such gentry about. I'll engage there's enough whiskey on the ground already to set a pow-wow going that you and your sister will wish yourselves well out of."

"I certainly hope Miss McGregor will be persuaded," said Mr. Ewing to Madeleine. "I know something of the habits and customs which the Indians have unfortunately borrowed from those who should have taught them better; and I am certain you will be jeopardizing your comfort, if not your safety, by taking up your quarters even under the roof of the trading-house. If your sister is wise, she will put the Fox River between you and such undesirable neighbors."

"Do you think the Winnebagoes likely to be more distasteful neighbors than the Waubanakees and Menomonees?" asked Miss McGregor, with a slight touch of sarcasm in her tone.

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* Indians—literally, friends.

"I do, most certainly, since they are entirely without the restraints of military supervision and discipline."

Miss McGregor seemed wavering, when her decision was settled by a few words from Colonel Bentley, who approached and with great suavity accosted her.

"My dear young lady, I am very glad to find that you are still here. I have a great favor to ask of you. You know that these are ticklish times, and though we have got our duty to do, yet I, for one, have no desire to do more than my duty; that is, I do not wish to show myself unnecessarily stern or severe. I think it sometimes happens that we can avoid extremities, if we can only come to a right understanding; but the thing is how to understand these chaps. You see I am coming to the point. I do not find that I have a single person in my whole command who can speak the Winnebago language."

"No, I dare say not," said Miss McGregor. "It is a language almost impossible for a white man to learn."

"Is that so? A most interesting fact," said the Commissioner, drawing out his note-book.

"In my dilemma, I must appeal to you," pursued the colonel.

"Lapierre, who has charge of the trading-house, is allied to these people—he speaks the language perfectly. I have no doubt he will act as interpreter," said Miss McGregor.

"Oh, no doubt, in a regular talk or council, or upon any special occasion. I shall take care to engage his services for such. But what I want—what, in fact, is indispensable—is some one who can be always at hand in case of emergency. While I wish to impress upon the Indians that the Government is to be respected, I am anxious to avoid appearing as an enemy; and, to that end, I wish to talk with all the chiefs as they come in, or as I can find occasion. Does not that seem to you the right policy?"

"I certainly think your ideas both wise and kind," said Miss McGregor.

"Then, since I cannot expect that Lapierre will leave his business to take up his abode altogether with us while we are here——"

"No, he could not do that," said Miss McGregor. "He will have to attend very diligently to getting our boats and their cargoes over the portage road. Michaud tells me that the whole will have to be carried on ox-carts from the Fox River to the Wisconsin,—a distance of about two miles,—and that two days' time will hardly suffice for the transportation of all."

"I could hardly venture to plead with Miss McGregor, upon any score save that of duty, to engage in a task that may naturally be distasteful to her," said the colonel, politely; "yet if her own good feelings should prompt her to accede to my earnest request, and if she would allow me to order a marquee pitched for her and made as comfortable as circumstances will allow, while she takes up her quarters close beside us——"

It was, in truth, a distasteful office for Monica, but she was not slow to perceive the possible advantages to be derived from her undertaking it. She turned for a moment towards the bourgeois. He looked a little anxious, and Madeleine still more so.

"I do not know that there is any urgent reason why we should go on to Lapierre's," she said.

"None in the least," said Logan. "I think it desirable, on the contrary, that you should spare yourselves such surroundings as you would find now at the trading-house."

"But it will not be necessary for Colonel Bentley to trouble himself about a tent for us. We have our own little one, which, if you please, you will have pitched somewhere on the verge of the encampment,—in a place

where, if necessary, any of the clerks or men, or possibly," she said, with a sad smile, "even some among my old friends the Ho-tshung-rahs, may come and see me without dread that they are intruding or transgressing."

"I shall certainly take care that you and they have full liberty, madame," said the commanding officer, courteously.

"Then, Monsieur Tremblay," said the young lady, "we will depend upon you to take charge of my sister and my self while Mr. Logan arranges with Lapierre about the transportation of our boats and their lading. And, Mr. Logan, may I trouble you to return to this side by-and-by? There are various little matters that I wish to consult you about."

So, having caused the eyes of the bourgeois to brighten with the certainty that he was not to be entirely shaken off, Miss McGregor accepted the arm of Colonel Bentley, and, leaving Madeleine to the gallant Monsieur Tremblay, together they ascended the bluff.

CHAPTER XLI.

NOTHING more admirably suited for an encampment could have been found, than the esplanade to which the colonel and Miss McGregor ascended.

It was on the summit of a small spur, around three sides of which wound the tortuous course of the Fox River, while the fourth—that by which the road from "the bay" approached—was fringed by the native forest. Beyond the lowlands, and a little to the right, rose a corresponding bluff, on which was situated the trading-establishment of the Fur Company. To reach this, one might either ferry

across the stream and walk some two or three furlongs, then gradually ascend the rising ground, passing along the brow of the hill for a short distance, or else take boat at the place where the travellers had this afternoon disembarked, and, threading a long loop of the river, going once back and twice forward, at length reach the point in question.

Far away, beyond the portage, to the left, were the cliffs of the Wisconsin; and even a faint line of the Barribault Hills might be descried, many miles distant.

It was an extremely pretty landscape as it lay bright in the afternoon sun; perhaps the numerous little matted lodges which dotted the low grounds beyond the river, clustering most thickly in the immediate vicinity of the shabby, irregular buildings which formed the trading-establishment, did not diminish the picturesque effect of the whole.

Monica gazed upon the scene with an eye of anxious longing. Oh, if she could have but wandered awhile among the lodges, seeking information, acquiring, cautiously, a certainty as to the fate of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah! And yet all inquiries, she knew, would have been fruitless. If he had left, it had been without imparting his intentions to any one; while, if one of his people had accidentally learned of his flight, no word, no sign, not the quivering of a muscle, would have betrayed the truth to an inquirer. Reflections such as these taught her that her best wisdom was to remain quietly near the commanding officer, making herself useful to him, and striving to acquire such an influence as would be advantageous in future efforts for her friends.

She took the seat the colonel had caused to be made ready for her by his soldiers, and here he soon left her, that he might give orders for such arrangements as he

deemed necessary to the safety and well-being of his command.

An incident occurred soon after the colonel quitted her which gave her food for uncomfortable speculations.

A small company of Winnebagoes made their appearance, coming out on the forest road, from the quarter opposite the portage and trading-house. They evidently were friends and desired to appear such. They saluted the commanding officer, and one of them who spoke a little Chippewa endeavored to explain that they were travelling peaceably to their home at the Four Lakes. Mr. Ewing was called upon to interpret to them what the colonel had to say in reply, which was simply that they must give up their arms and consent to remain close prisoners until the business which brought the military into the country should be accomplished. Monica's heart swelled with bitterness when she saw the wild looks of surprise and alarm with which this notification was received, and her feeling of gratitude to Ewing was of corresponding intensity when she marked the effect of his soothing assurances to the natives that they should be well cared for, and their guns and other weapons be restored to them in safety ere long, and while she listened to his kindly efforts to set them at ease by questioning them about their journey, the abundance of game, the varieties of fish in the little lakes in the neighborhood, and the different wintering grounds to which they resorted in the proper season for their hunting and trapping.

It was not until she saw them comparatively reassured that she began to look about her. She wondered that she saw nothing of her sister and M. Tremblay. The extended level around her was full of busy life. Tents were being pitched, stores brought up from the boats and placed under shelter, fatigue-parties were transporting wood from the

forest for culinary purposes—every variety of preparation was going on, giving animation to the scene. Mrs. Smart and Mrs. Hale were visible in the distance, awaiting the proper moment for superintending the arrangement of their own special accommodations; but no Madeleine or M. Tremblay was in view.

"I am afraid she is going a little too far," she murmured. "Without doubt, Logan is taking advantage of my absence and lingering near her, instead of hastening to engage Lapierre to attend at once to our transportation." She was about rising with the intention of going in search of her sister, when she became aware of the tall figure of a Winnebago, with his blanket folded around him, standing quite close to her, but somewhat screened from the observation of others by a stunted tree against which he had been leaning. She waited to hear what he might have to say before accosting him; then, as he did not speak, she ventured, in a low tone, the inquiry,—

"Tshah-ko-zhah?" (Who, or what is it?)

"Mau-nee-kah!" he exclaimed, with evident satisfaction —then added, "Tell them not to strike—in two days they will come in."

"Who will come in?" Her voice trembled with the question. "All of them?"

"No; only two."

"Wee-kau and Tshah-nee-kah?"

No answer. She looked around—the Indian was gone. She arose, and walked in the direction in which she thought he must have disappeared; she could see only a few canoes paddling about in the river below the bluff, in none of which could she discern a figure like the one which had been addressing her.

She considered it her duty not to withhold from the commanding officer the message confided to her.

"Oh, no," said the colonel, in his usual off-hand manner "I shall not strike until joined by the troops from the Mississippi, at all events. It is not probable that we shall be under the necessity of making any demonstration at all. These fellows understand by this time that matters have got to a serious pass—that there is to be no boys' play with them. Oh, yes, they'll come in—never fear—they'll come in."

Monica moved along towards the place where she had ascended from the landing, esteeming herself fortunate in encountering Mr. Ewing on her way thither. As for Captain Lytle, remembering his rebuff of the day before, he held himself aloof. Perhaps he thought it politic to punish the young lady by a show of indifference. "It was hardly worth while to have applied to be attached to the expedition for the sake of seeing her again, if this is the way I am to be rewarded!" had been his indignant soliloquy. "I shall show her that her power is not altogether what she imagines it to be." So he sulked in the distance, and left Miss McGregor to find an escort as she might.

"Mr. Ewing, may I ask the favor of your arm, while I go to find my sister?" she said, without ceremony; and Ewing, who had been looking forward to an opportunity of a chat with Madeleine about her friend Miss Latimer, gladly offered his services to assist Miss McGregor down the steep path which conducted to the landing-place.

To her surprise, she found the Company's boats still where she had left them. She had hoped that they were already at the trading-house on the other side. Sunday though it was, things were in a lively commotion; and Madeleine, seated upon a projection of the bank, with M. Tremblay on the one side, and on the other the bourgeois, holding her parasol to screen her from the sun, was looking on and listening with amused interest.

A few words will explain the scene which met Miss McGregor's view. She had scarcely quitted the landing in company with Colonel Bentley when Logan, feeling that there were considerations paramount even to the prompt transportation of the boats across the portage, set about the arrangements necessary to insure to the ladies every comfort and accommodation in their unforeseen change of quarters. His first care was to ascertain whether there was a spring of pure water in the vicinity; and, finding there was nothing of the kind, his next step was to borrow a couple of small canoes and send some of his men a distance up the stream with kegs to be filled from that portion of the river which had remained undisturbed and undefiled by such an element as now blocked up the bend in which the little navy lay.

The propriety of there being always some one at hand upon whom the sisters should have a right to call at any moment from reveille till tattoo, seemed self-evident; Logan therefore announced his intention of taking up his quarters in the ladies' boat, which was to be left behind when the others were taken around to the trading-house. His plan meeting the approbation of the fair listener to whom he imparted it, his next step was to make choice of a person to whom the five boats could be safely confided to be sent with their precious cargoes to the trading-house. The clerks, each one of whom had the immediate supervision of a boat, were all young and inexperienced—personally unacquainted with Lapierre, with the peculiarities of the Portage, with the Puans as a people. Logan himself, remembering that he labored under the same disadvantages, had been disposed to make old Michaud, the only competent and experienced person of the outfit, bourgeois *de facto* —it now occurred to make him so *de jure*. He was not an oarsman; in fact, he was rather a mate, or lieutenant.

Truly, there was no one so eligible to the post as the cheerful, energetic, well-trained old hivernant. He would take the boats round to the trading-house and keep them as the apple of his eye, till the moment when it should be convenient for his chief to resume command.

Proud and delighted was Michaud at the trust reposed in him, and his elation was, if possible, enhanced by the vociferous cheers with which both clerks and engagés received the injunction, delivered in the clear, ringing tones of the master, to "respect the authority of their new bourgeois, and to aid him in the fulfilment of his duty by every means in their power."

Fully appreciating the glory of his position, Michaud lost no time in mounting an elevation from which he could, "by permission," speak a few words to his subordinates.

"I will say what I have to say before Monsieur Mark," he began, in his amusing patois, "that he may see I understand my business. Now, first, our men, you will understand that you can have no frolic at the stopping-place over there. There are savages all round—more than plenty—so you must keep sober, and give up the pleasure of being put in punishment to-morrow, as is our general custom the second day of a halt."

A chorus of "Ho-g-h," like the Indian grunt of assent, followed this announcement.

"Next, you must none of you expect to go off to a dance or a tea-party to-night, for the Puan beaux are very fond of finery, and, as they have got no hats of their own, they might want to help themselves to your *bonnets-rouges*,* and perhaps take too much of the top of the head along with them, by mistake."

* The red caps, sometimes called *tuques*, which the voyageurs wear in their journeys.

"Ho-g-h!"

"Nor must you go philandering about the meadows where the pretty Neechee girls are milking their cows; for the horns of the Puan cows are all filled with gunpowder, and they are apt, as we hear, to go off if a Frenchman does but look at them."

"Ho-g-h!"

"And for another thing——" But here Michaud's harangue was cut short by the voice of young Logan.

"Listen to me instead, our men. I have just received an order from the commanding officer to tie up the boats on this side. Ah! there he is, himself," as Colonel Bentley appeared on the path descending to the landing.

"I wish to impress upon you, young man," said the officer, addressing the bourgeois, "the necessity of a strict observance of the order my sergeant has just handed you. I have come myself to mention this, because I remember that on a former occasion an order which I issued to these boats was misunderstood. Not a single boat," turning and gesticulating towards them, "must move from the spot where it now lies. It would be running an unpardonable risk to take them to the trading-house, which is, I see by my glass, surrounded with Indians. For the same reason that I have endeavored to keep them under my eye thus far, I still hold charge of them. See to it, if you please, that not one of them quits its present station."

"Your orders shall be obeyed, sir," said Logan; and the colonel, without further parley, retraced his steps up the bank to what might now be called the encampment.

CHAPTER XLII.

MICHAUD, with a shrug of the shoulders and a grimace at the retreating form of the commanding officer, descended from his rostrum, a "sacré mon diable" winding up the oration he had been so glibly delivering.

"Eh b'an!—I wonder whose nose Nanna-bozho has given a pat to, this time!" was the malicious observation of the "excellent Coquillard."

"Rit b'an qui rit le dernier,"* said Michaud, sharply. "My nose isn't out of joint, if you please. I am as much bourgeois here as I should have been on the other side—voyez-vous. The boats and their crews are in my charge till we get into the Wisconsin, be sure of that."

Matters had reached this point when a corporal with a squad of men made his appearance at the little landing in front of which the covered boat, or, as the bourgeois called it, "the ladies' boat," was moored; the others lying ranged side by side in compact order. The corporal felt that he was an officer, albeit a non-commissioned one, and he promptly called out, in a bluff tone,—

"Halloo, men! just draw off your boat. We are going to bring in one or two of ours that some of the greenhorns have shoved up stream."

Nobody stirred; it was nobody's business to do so, without the orders of the bourgeois. The dogged air of old Michaud was a sufficient hint to the Yankee to whom to address himself.

"I say, Jean Baptiste, or whatever your name is, I want

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* He laughs best who laughs last.

them boats out of the way, that I may bring in my captain's things and the other officers'. Come, step lively, will ye?"

One of the *mangeurs de lard*, hearing his own name called, made a forward movement.

"Kien (tiens), nos pincettes—halte-là!"* was the prompt order of the new bourgeois.

The latter word was intelligible to the soldier.

"Halt? Why! ain't you a going to move, and let me bring my boats in, I want to know?"

"Pas si bête,"† was Michaud's laconic response.

"I don't know what you mean by bait," said the corporal; "and, what's more, I can't say as I know what you mean anyhow. But this much I know, that I want to come up to this here landing to take out my load, and I rather guess I shall. You've gone and scrouged yourself into my place."

"'Aujourd'hui c'est le jour de Lambert,
Celui qui laisse sa place le perd!'"‡

cried Michaud, at the top of his voice, his companions sending up a shout of applause. The soldier's patience was exhausted.

"I don't want to hear any of your darned French gibberish," he cried. "I want you to do as you're asked; if not, you'll do as you are ordered—for you'll be reported to the colonel in less than three shakes of a goose's tail, if you don't stir your stumps."

"And I tell you," cried Michaud, finding all of a sudden a very respectable degree of English with which to make himself understood, "that I don't stir one stump—me.

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* Hold on, Tongs—stop there.

† Not such a fool.

‡ To-day it is St. Lambert's day,
If you quit your place you lose it for aye.

Monsieur le Collo-néll he stand dere," pointing to the bank, "and he shake his sword at me, and he look so tall ever he can," here Michaud, in imitation of the majestic port of the officer, drew up to his full height, which was, to be sure, not much to speak of, and shot fierce glances out of his clear gray eyes, as he set his square teeth firmly and brandished his arm, "and he say to me, 'See you keep right in dat spot! Don't you move one boat; no, not one foot.' Dat is my order, and I keep him. Je ne bouge pas—moi."

Michaud had received his *consigne*, and it is part of the code of a voyageur to fulfil unflinchingly what he has been appointed to do. It was a triumph, moreover, to be able so speedily to assert his authority as bourgeois before the snub-nosed Coquillard. It was just at this moment that Miss McGregor and Mr. Ewing appeared, and received from Madeleine an explanation of what was going forward.

"I suppose I had better interpose," said the young lady, "since you, Mr. Logan, perhaps hardly feel at liberty to resume the powers you have delegated to Michaud."

Madeleine fancied there was a tone of dissatisfaction in her sister's voice; but, without further remark, the latter stepped forward to the boat, where she soon made the deputy bourgeois understand how agreeable it would be to her to see him give way to the corporal for awhile. At the first words of the young lady came the cheerful response,—

"Pour le sûr," quickly followed by the order,—

"Vite en besogne, nos gens! aux avirons!" And without further loss of time a chance was given to Corporal Cotton to bring in his boat, with its luggage and appliances for his officers' comfort.

This little episode at an end, the thoughts of Miss McGregor reverted to their former channel. She seated herself near her sister, taking, however, no part in the conversation that was going on; her thoughts were far away.

"Another long and weary day must pass before I can obtain any news." Such was her sad soliloquy. "At the end of two days, the Winnebago said, they will come in. Can it be that the chiefs have come to the resolution to give them up? Wau-nig-sootsh-kah affirmed that they would not do so; yet it seems incredible that Wee-kau, the meanest and worst Indian in the tribe, should be capable of the magnanimity of surrendering himself to save his people. Perhaps his associate is one equally debased with himself, and it is accounted by the leaders in the tribe good policy to give them into the hands of those who will administer justice to them. Still, that is so unlike them! By going over to Lapierre's I might possibly see some of the braves, and learn more of the matter. Why should I not go? *I* am certainly under no interdict—but then, Madeleine——"

She looked around for M. Tremblay; that worthy gentleman was no longer at hand. He had seized the first chance of slipping away and mounting the bank, in search of his military friend; not that he exactly expected the merry captain to sit down with him, on this sacred day, to his favorite game, though "Out here, 'mong de sauvages, where nobody couldn't know it, dere couldn't be nevair no scandals to do it," had been his inward remark.

Mr. Ewing's approach, at this moment, inspired Miss McGregor with a sudden resolution.

"Would you have any objection to escorting me over to the Company's trading-house?" she said. "The men who have gone for water will soon be back, and I am much inclined to let them take one of the canoes and paddle me over, in search of news of some kind."

"It will give me great pleasure to go," said the young man. "Will you allow me to paddle you instead of the engagés? It seems a matter of moment to keep them as well as the boats on this side of the river."

"If you will be so very good, it will doubtless save some trouble to-morrow. My sister will, of course, prefer not to come; I must be the one to take the information." She approached the bourgeois. "Mr. Logan, is it not time to be taking some thought about our accommodations for the night?"

"I am awaiting your orders, madam," was the reply. "I have not been apprised whether I am to have the tents pitched within the verge of the encampment or somewhat outside, or whether you propose to avail yourself of Colonel Bentley's offer of a marquee."

"Oh, no—no marquee. If you can select a spot quite near the western brow of the hill, just opposite the portage road, and have a couple of tents pitched there—one for my sister and myself, and the other for M. Tremblay and a clerk, who may act as a messenger in case of necessity. There is no occasion to make any provision for our meals, for I have promised Mrs. Smart to join her mess for to-morrow and the next day. And, by-the-by, Madeleine, it would be as well that you should go and find Mrs. Smart and Mrs. Hale at once, for I am going over to Lapierre's on an errand of importance. Where can M. Tremblay be? I am afraid he has forgotten us."

M. Tremblay had not forgotten his own accommodation—it was that which brought him back to the landing at the very moment he was wanted. He had wandered around and through the encampment without finding Captain Lovel.

"He was here awhile ago," said Gaylord.

"I saw him mixing a pretty stiff tumbler of toddy, in the colonel's marquee, half an hour since," was the information accorded by the quartermaster.

"I heard him rating his corporal for being so long in bringing up his buffalo robe and blankets," put in the citizen-surgeon of the expedition.

"Ah! den he mus' be get sleepy—want to take one leet' nap," was the inference of Monsieur, after putting that and that together. "I hunt him once more." And by peering round he soon discovered his friend's rubicund face, giving token, as he lay snoring in his tent, that his potation had been none of the mildest.

"Well, I go see about some tent myself," said the worthy gentleman, as he bent his steps towards the landing.

"Well, I never expected to see Mrs. Smart so quiet when there was business going on," remarked Mr. Gaylord, as he walked a few steps along with him. "She sits there like Patience on a monument!"—a simile that tickled M. Tremblay hugely, and which he repeated to himself, as he carefully picked his steps down the hill.

"Ah! here comes Monsieur. Did you see anything of Mrs. Smart and Mrs. Hale while you were up on the plain, monsieur? And have they got their tent pitched and things arranged?" inquired Miss McGregor.

"Oh, de tent not a bit ready yet. Dey stand dere like two patient on one monument—no, like one patient on two monument—waiting for his two husband to have someting fix ready. Mr. Smart have so many leet' quelquechoses to see to, so de soldiers not steal; den after dat he see to de lady. I always see to de lady first—me."

"M. Tremblay will go with you to join them, Madeleine. I shall not be back till after retreat. Beg Mrs. Smart to give herself no trouble on my account; I dare say we shall get a cup of tea with Madame Lapierre. And if you see the colonel, tell him I will keep military hours, and be in before tattoo." And, heavy as was her heart, Monica went away with a cheerful air, to seek tidings of weal or woe at the trading-house.

CHAPTER XLIII.

The little canoe, or rather pirogue, which was to convey Miss McGregor had been, by order of the young bourgeois, thickly carpeted with the coarse prairie-grass, and into it she stepped, taking her seat carefully at one end, while Ewing knelt in the other and dexterously plied his paddle. His rapid strokes, now on the right hand and now on the left, caused the little craft to shoot through the water with the velocity of a bird, as it threaded the sinuosities of the narrow stream, alternately advancing and then apparently retreating, until it brought them to the small dock or platform in front of the trading-house.

A sharp, yelping chorus, from any number of Indian dogs belonging to the surrounding lodges, was their ungracious and only welcome. No one came forth to meet the young lady, though a roguish-looking boy who was standing near hopped after her as she walked, and a girl with a well-grown child, packed papoose-fashion in a dirty cotton shawl, stared at her with a sort of admiring wonder, and kept pace with the steps by which she and the secretary approached the largest building in the group—the house of Lapierre.

It was a comfortable tenement, built of tamarack logs chinked and daubed with mud, then whitewashed to give it an air of neatness. The roof was of bark, and the chimney of small stones; and it had a lean-to of a rougher construction, large enough to accommodate a kitchen, and also a hangar or store-room. There were other buildings for the use of teamsters, blacksmiths, farmers, et cetera, altogether forming quite a little hamlet.

The room which the visitors entered was furnished with plain, substantial tables and chairs, and a neat-looking bed stood in one corner of the room. The floor was covered with Indian mats of a tasteful, pretty pattern. Altogether, the little parlor of Madame Lapierre, or Madame Glode,* for it was more the fashion to give her her husband's Christian name, would have outshone the quarters of many a young lieutenant at a frontier post in that day.

The bed was not unoccupied. Upon it lay an infant, apparently in the last stages of prostration and debility, and over it was bending the mother, as was unmistakable from the look of haggard anxiety in her dark, wan countenance. She was a tall and meagre person, with the features and complexion that announce the métive in whom the first bloom of youth is past. Her long, dark hair was drawn back from her forehead and gathered into a mass behind, around which were wound a few dark ribbons embroidered with beads. Her dress and the small shawl around her shoulders were of the peculiar sort of print called *Indienne*, in which the aboriginal maidens delight, but which would be sought in vain in the shop of a city trader.

Miss McGregor approached with the half-inquiry,—

"It is not Madame Glode?"

"Non—elle est pas icite—ils se sont sauvés—tous—à l'autre bout."†

"Run away? Over to the Wisconsin?"

"Oui, chez Madame Amelle—'ienqu' pour crier des beloits,"‡ she explained, correcting herself.

"Will they be home soon?"

"I suppose."

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* Claude.

† She is not here. They have run away to the other end of the portage.

‡ At Madame Amelle's, but only to get some whortleberries.

"Was not Lapierre expecting our boats? Did not the Courte-Oreille, Le Loup, tell him we were on the way?"

"I suppose—but no one that can get away cares to stay and see the Big Knives, till they know what they come for."

"Surely Lapierre would not be such a goose as to run away! What have the soldiers to do with him, pray? He should have stayed here and attended to his business. It seems that the Puans themselves have had more sense!" Miss McGregor was excessively vexed.

"Les sauvages? Pardonne.—there are none but women in the lodges. The white soldiers do not harm women."

"It is certainly very provoking. Did Lapierre leave no message for me?"

"I do not know. I do not live here; I live over by Goose Lake, and I have brought my sick baby in for Madame Glode's advice."

"Your baby looks indeed very ill. Could Madame Glode give it nothing to relieve it?"

"She made it a tisane after a receipt of Madame Cucroche, but it has not helped it. And now, the poor little one! I have done for it the last that I can think of." She turned back the blanket with which the infant was covered, and displayed a heart of scarlet cloth lying upon the chest of the child and held in place by a string around its neck.

"If the bleeding heart of our good Lord does not work a cure," said the mother, with patient resignation, "we must submit to His will. I placed it there in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

There was all the devotion of faith in the manner of the poor woman as she crossed herself, then clasped her hands and stood as if waiting and still hoping that a miracle

might interpose to save her little one. Monica felt rebuked for her own want of patience, and forcing herself, as a penance, to manifest still further interest in the baby, she inquired,—

"Was it a healthy, strong child before this sickness?"

"No; it was always delicate. It was born in the cold, damp, spring weather. I was at my sugar-camp. I was all alone—no, not alone, for the good God was with me. But I had sent my sister in for Madame Pétaille, the sage-femme——"

Mr. Ewing walked away, but Miss McGregor was compelled to listen to the history of sufferings and hardships such as, in the former days, were no rarity among wives and mothers on the frontier.

"Are you the sister of Madame Glode?" she asked. "You resemble her."

"No; our mothers were sisters—I-hó-ways."

"And the family left you and your sick baby here alone?"

"No, Madame Cu-croche* was here just now. She has gone to give orders about the cows of Geneviève—Madame Glode, that is."

"What a name—Cu-croche! Is she a sauvagesse?"†

"She is a métive. For the name—it is the way the voyageurs like to call her husband—he was chief clerk here before Lapierre."

"Surely you do not mean Hugh Ross, the Scotchman?"

"B'an oui—Monsieur Cu-roche,‡ some say,—'ienqu' pour badiner."§

"It is certainly," thought Monica, "an inconvenient sort of badinage that distorts the names of Christian people in this way. I heard Michaud, only yesterday, speaking of the bourgeois as Monsieur L'Eau Grande—but this is

* Crook-tail. † Indian woman. ‡ Stone-tail. § Just for fun.

terribly disrespectful." She again addressed the woman: "We have a doctor at the encampment. Would you like to have me send him over to visit your baby?"

"Non, merci. I had rather trust to this. The doctor might give him a movitif.* The medicines of the white doctors make too sick—too sick."

The boy from without had entered during this dialogue, and was lounging against the door-cheek, drawing a pattern on the narrow strip of floor with his damp toes. The mother caught sight of him, and addressed him in her broadest patois:—

"Vitelle—fainéant—ote-toai! Va crier les vaches pour Madame Cu-croche, p'is les tirer."†

"Je n'en tire pas toutes—moai—je n'en tire 'ienqu' deux."‡

"Comb' est-ce qu'il y en a?"§

"'Y a trois; puis Dimmy doit tirer une,"‖ he said, with a whine.

"Vilain crapaud que tu est! Ote-toai, ou je crais que je vas t'assommer."¶

Well understanding that this threat, which was uttered in the most gentle of tones, was a mere figure of speech, Miss McGregor did not concern herself to see what would be its effect upon the contumacious Vitelle, but, with a few more words of sympathy and encouragement, walked forth to try what she could gather in the way of information among the Ho-tshung-rah matrons and maidens.

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* A vomitif or emetic.

† Vitelle, lazy-bones—take yourself off. Go get the cows for Madame Cu-croche and milk them.

‡ I shall not milk all of them—I shall milk only two.

§ How many are there?

‖ There are three, and Dimmy must milk one.

¶ Miserable toad! Take yourself off, or I believe I shall knock you down!

Pleasant smiles and hand-shakings testified the satisfaction with which her salutation in their own vernacular was received. All were ready with their "Bon-jour—bon-jour! Mau-nee-kah! Hee-nee-kar-ray-kay-noo!"*—but no one had an item of news to give her. To all her questions the most vague and unsatisfactory answers were returned.

"Where are all the chiefs and braves?"

"They were far off—they might be at the Barribault—they might be at the Four Lakes—some lived farther still, on the Rocky River."

"A message had been sent that they were 'coming in' on the second day. *Who* were coming?"

"It might be that the chiefs would come in, to ask what the Big Knives wanted."

"But it was no secret what the Big Knives wanted. They had told plainly enough at the council at Khaar-ay-t'hay-noo.† They have come for the people who killed the Gagnier family."

"Yes—for them."

"Will the chiefs bring them in and give them up?"

"The chiefs do not tell the women what they will do."

"And the braves—have they lost their tongues also?"

"The braves are not here—they are far away."

"Far away!" said Miss McGregor. "That may mean down at Man-Eater's village, or lying *perdu* behind the nearest clump of hazel-bushes yonder. There is nothing to be done but to return to the camp as wise as I left it."

And she did return, sad and dejected, to wait another twenty-four hours, or perhaps even longer, before receiving the assurance of the safety of him to whom her heart clung so fondly.

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* The walker or traveller—how do you do? The French "Good-day" is used by all the tribes of the Northwest.

† The Little Butte des Morts.

The strain upon her nerves had been greater than Monica's physical strength and mental energy, great as they were, could sustain. On the morning of the following day she found herself suffering with such an acute headache that she was compelled to desist from the task of dressing, and return to her hard couch of buffalo robes and blankets upon the ground of the tent.

Madeleine had a fire kindled on the brow of the hill at a little distance, and a cup of tea made, which she vainly tried to persuade her sister to partake of.

"Leave me alone," said Monica. "It is my best chance of being well for to-morrow."

"Why for to-morrow? Are we going to leave then? Will they take the boats over to-day?"

"No—I don't know—no matter. Only let me be quiet."

An uncomfortable train of thought passed through her mind:—

"It is leaving the fawn to the hunter, I suppose; but I cannot help it. It was a sad mistake to allow this to have a beginning; but it is too late to think of that now."

Still, she did think of it, and the thought did not tend to quiet her nerves; neither did her speculations upon the probable whereabouts of General A.'s command at this moment—whether it had, as Captain Lovel predicted, "dammed up the Wisconsin," and made the passage of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah to the land of the Omahas an undertaking of peculiar danger and difficulty.

It was not until noon had passed that she began to experience any mitigation of her evil symptoms; even then, she scarcely felt in spirits to rise. While she was debating whether she should do so, she heard the voices of persons passing outside, in close proximity to the tent.

"Yes, this messenger, whoever he might be," said one speaker, "repeated the same information that Miss Mc-

Gregor received yesterday; then he was gone like a shot. He said they would come in to-morrow; and, by the quarter of the sky he pointed to, I judged it would be about three o'clock."

"I would have come over earlier, but I thought Miss McGregor would interpret for you."

By the low, measured accents, as well as by the tenor of his words, Monica recognized Lapierre. The other speaker was the commanding officer.

Oh, what an opportunity had she lost! She sprang up, thinking it not too late, perhaps, to dress herself and follow them. She *must* learn something further. But the effort was useless. Her head turned so with giddiness, and the pain was so blinding, that she was obliged again to throw herself prostrate upon her hard couch.

"If Madeleine were only here!" she said.

Her sister had sat beside her all the forenoon, and had only left her at the summons of M. Tremblay, because Monica insisted on her not disappointing Mrs. Smart, with whom she was to dine. Perhaps she had never welcomed her sister so cordially as at this moment, when she made her appearance accompanied by an engagé bearing hot coffee, biscuit, marmalade—every delicacy, in short, within the range of Mrs. Smart's mess-baskets. But it was not upon the tempting dainties that Miss McGregor bestowed a look.

"Ah! you've returned! I'm so glad! Lapierre is here. Can you find him and bring him to the door of the tent? I must speak with him."

"Lapierre? Yes, I saw him; but he is not here now. He has just left for the other side. The colonel has removed his interdict in regard to the boats. He allows all, except the one in which all the guns and ammunition are to be placed, to be taken round to the trading-house; and

Lapierre hurried back to help arrange about putting the cargoes in his hangar, so that the boats can be transported at once across the portage."

"How did you learn all this?"

"It was Lapierre himself who told me."

"Where is Logan?"

"I suppose with the boats, expediting matters. I have not seen him."

"That is well," thought Miss McGregor. "After all, Madeleine does not forget her position as a lady; and, fortunately, the young man seems to recollect just at present that he is nothing but a bourgeois. Matters may not turn out so badly, after all; and yet——" Here the recollection came up of what she had witnessed at the Grande Chûte.

"That was decisive. He kissed her, and she permitted it! She has, then, promised to be his wife. And my father, what will he say? If he loved me not too well before, what will be his feelings towards me now?"

It was, upon the whole, rather a relief to her that Lapierre was gone. With that inconsistency which all have experienced, she shrunk from the possible chance of hearing truths which would wellnigh have annihilated her. If she should have learned, for instance, that there was a shade of doubt whether the Red Bird had been able to evade the vigilance of the military or the prying eyes of the settlers and squatters. But why should she suggest such doubts? Doubts! there were none. He was gone. Fate (she dared not say Providence) would never be so cruel as to make the contrary possible. Had Wau-nig-sootsh-kah failed in his enterprise, would he not have sent a message to apprise her of it? Assuredly he would. Her hearing nothing was proof conclusive that all was well. And since, happily, there was no cause for solicitude on Madeleine's

account either, the best course was to tranquillize her feelings by dismissing every painful thought and uncomfortable foreboding.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THERE was everywhere an appearance of unusual activity as Miss McGregor looked forth over the parade-ground on the following morning.

She was aware what event was expected to take place —was being diligently prepared for; and she resolved to ask no questions. Wee-kau and Tshah-nee-kah were not, it is true, characters to enlist her tender sympathy, but there is something in the enactment of justice towards the most hardened criminal, that is solemn, almost appalling.

The accused were "coming in," to be surrendered to the arm of the white man's law; under the circumstances, condemnation and death were inevitably to follow.

She was afraid lest Colonel Bentley, in his satisfaction at having accomplished the object of his mission so easily, would insist on descanting upon the subject to her. This, she knew, would be more than she could bear.

To defeat any such intention, she signalled M. Tremblay, who was awaiting her at a little distance, and, with Madeleine, slipped quietly along to the tent of Mrs. Smart, just as the drum and fife were sending forth with vigor the breakfast-call of "Pease upon a trencher." And the officers, old and young, were hurrying as well-bred gentlemen, ay, and even gentlemen in love, will hurry, in obedience to that inspiring summons.

The commanding officer's marquee and the tents of the

other gentlemen, civil and military, were stretched along the northern verge of the little plain. On the same line, but farther removed from the front looking over towards the portage, was the establishment of Mrs. Smart—a small camp, in which were accommodated the Hale family, as well as an ample supply of stores, both substantials and delicacies; the latter embracing a tempting variety of game which the enterprising lady had already contrived to forage.

Miss McGregor had made choice of the corner diagonal to this on which to place her tent. Overlooking the portage and fronting on the river, it was the point to which the canoe of an Indian might steal with least danger of detection, should it so happen that *some one* should wish to send her a message. Her spirits rose as it became now almost certain that there was no one at hand to whom it would be a matter of importance to communicate with her.

The soldiers of the command and the Indian allies were camped between the parade-ground and the forest; a chain of sentinels keeping guard outside the whole.

Mrs. Smart was now at the door of her tent to receive the young ladies, whom she welcomed with voluble eagerness.

"Set you right down here," she said. "You won't mind its being only a candle-box? for we can't, you know, bring chairs and such things with us. We must all make allowances for each other. I've done one good thing," lowering her voice; "I've given Mrs. Hale and her young ones an early breakfast and packed them off into their own tent. No brats for me, I thank you, when I am expecting company. You see," with her comical wink and screw of the mouth, "my Corbin brought me a few nice little blue-winged teal, that I didn't think it worth while to waste on everybody. I would have liked to have had Smart taste them; but he had to be off early, over to the other side, to

see what chance there was about getting our boats across the portage. Not that we want to interfere with anybody else, I'm sure; but everybody has to put in a little for themselves in such times as these. Well, now, I wish that young man would come! I guess it wouldn't be worth while to wait breakfast for him, though, and let everything spoil. Mr. Bo-jo I call him sometimes in a hurry, but I'm sure I ought to remember his other name. I have said a piece about it many a time, out of the American Perceptor:—'Who will mourn for Logan? Not one!'" she declaimed, with a theatrical air.

"Not a very consoling announcement, Mrs. Smart: I hope it is not strictly true," said the young gentleman in question, as he at the moment made his appearance from the ascending path.

"Oh, my gracious! pray excuse me—no, indeed, Mr. Logan," said the discomposed hostess. "It was only a little bit of poetry I was a repeating. I'm sure I didn't mean it for truth."

"Not more truth than poetry, perhaps," said Logan, laughing.

"Not a bit; you are so kind! You know I didn't mean anything disrespectful. And here's Miss McGregor inside. She's a good deal better, though I can't say I think she looks quite like herself yet—a little bit peaking or so; but Miss Madeleine's just as bright as a May morning. No, no, take your seat! don't you mind me. I can take care of number one—I always do."

"Yes, please sit down—no ceremony," said Miss McGregor; "and when we have breakfasted we will hear what has been done, and what yet remains to do. My sister has told me of the good fortune of being able to send our boats round to the trading-house."

Mrs. Smart made herself as entertaining as was in her

power, with an account of her having sent two of her people "on the sly," the evening before, with crackers and loaf-sugar to barter with the Indians around the trading-house for birds and venison.

"But there are no Indians there; there are only women," objected Miss McGregor.

"Bless your heart! don't you believe it; plenty of 'em. I got Mr. Glode, as they call him, to teach me a few words of their gibberish, and, after all, to be sure, I must find out that my Corbin, who's been up in the country before, knew ever so many words. So I needn't have broke my jaws over their way-skap-rah* and their tah-nee-zhoo-rah.† Such a lingo!"

"It is unlike English, to be sure, but it does not sound harsh when it is spoken by the natives themselves," said Miss McGregor, always a little tenacious upon the subject of her people.

"Well, I suppose a body can get used to 'most anything," assented Mrs. Smart, politely. "I did at school, I remember, to the dog-Latin the girls used to talk—though I can't say it ever sounded like anything but dog-Latin, after all."

Miss McGregor made no further efforts to bespeak indulgence for the Ho-tshung-rah dialect, but, breakfast being over, she summoned her sister and M. Tremblay to accompany her to the landing-place, ostensibly to look at the state of the arms and ammunition, which still lay under embargo, but in reality to secure a place as far as possible from sight or sound of what was going forward on the plain.

"And you won't forget," cried their hostess, "that, as there's such great doings coming off about two or three

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* Bread, or other farinaceous food. † Sugar.

o'clock, we're only going to take a nice little lunch about noon, and not have dinner till it's all over. The colonel is having his big marquee all fixed up as nice as you please, for us to sit in and have a good sight of everything."

The news of this arrangement was anything but pleasing to Miss McGregor. "I cannot understand," she said, "why there should be such a parade made upon the occasion. Surely two persons accused of crime might be delivered into the hands of justice, or what passes for such, without a spectacle being furnished to all the world. It is not such a triumph to the Government to get possession of the supposed culprits, that there should be a grand military fête in honor of the occasion."

"And to think of the poor creatures themselves!" said Madeleine. "Brought forward to be gazed on; knowing all the time that everybody is thinking of them with horror; nobody remembering that they perhaps fancied they were performing a meritorious action."

"No, no," said her sister, with earnest emphasis, "they never thought that. They knew they were wrong, and therefore they wickedly tried to entice another to accompany them. They drew *him* into the snare that he might share the odium and the punishment."

Madeleine and the bourgeois looked at her with silent amazement; neither had the slightest idea of the cause of her vehemence. M. Tremblay, whose feelings, both as a citizen and a Frenchman, were all alive upon the subject of the murders, took up the word:—

"Dat jes' so as Miss Monique say. He know great deal better, dis Oiseau Rouge. He one ver' smart Indian—know 'most so much as one white man. He no fool, he. Yes, he go coax dese oder two poor fellow; Miss Monique, she see t'rough him. He say, You come wid me, and we get some scalp, and meb-be heap oder good tings. And

den, ven he no can kill de woman Gagnier, 'cause she so brave and run 'way from him, den he scalp off de top of de head to dat poor leet' child, vot didn't die at all! So now I tink jes' as Miss Monique say. He be dat bad one dat do all de mischief; and best ting to shut him up in jail till he stop doing mischief; and wen he not will stop, hang him wid one rope to one tree, den see if he do so nex' time."

Experience had taught Miss McGregor that any attempt to set M. Tremblay right would only involve a subject in more hopeless entanglement; she therefore cut short Madeleine's parting civilities, and hurried her companions forward down the steep, rough path to the spot where the boats had lain moored.

Yet, quietly as the sisters had slipped away from the sutler's tent, there were watchful eyes taking account of their movements; and hardly had they gained the level of the river-bank, when a bevy of young officers, and Mr. Ewing along with them, appeared, to disconcert the plans the elder sister had been forming. If she could but have sought behind the canvas curtains of her own little boat a refuge from every sight and sound pertaining to the occasion which so occupied and excited the world around her! Such had been Monica's aim; but to accomplish it, she now saw, would be impossible.

Reflection came to her aid, soon reconciling her to what was inevitable. She remembered her promise to the commanding officer, to act as his interpreter should occasion require—a promise she had hoped not to be called upon to fulfil; but now it was possible her services might be of serious importance in making explanations, and securing some degree of leniency to the accused. Bad and wicked as Wee-kau and his companion were, they were nevertheless her people—she had a duty to perform in their behalf. She must secure for them all the forbearance and kindness

that earnest representations, or even supplications, could obtain.

It would not do to hide herself away. She must show Colonel Bentley that she was awaiting his call for her assistance, and she must be upon the spot when the misguided natives were brought before the authorities, to be placed in custody preparatory to being further dealt with. Resolved to put from her all thoughts of self-indulgence, she responded with as much cordiality as she could command to the congratulations of the young gentlemen, and their inquiries whether she was quite recovered—whether she thought there was any danger of another attack—whether she would allow "little pestle and mortar" (it was thus that the disrespectful Gaylord characterized the citizen-surgeon of the command) to make a prescription for her.

"I let him put up a couple of doses for me," said that young officer, "when we were down off the Yellow Thunder Banks, just to show him that he stood on a military footing, you understand; and I assure you that by the time I had carried them in my pocket for thirty-six hours or so, I was ready to be taken off the sick-report entirely."

CHAPTER XLV.

"TIME and the hour runs through the roughest day"—an aphorism of which Miss McGregor proved the truth when the protracted, weary forenoon at length came to an end.

She had endeavored to find some diversion from her anxious thoughts in watching her sister's countenance and

striving to divine how the coming solemnities affected her. Had she any solicitude in regard to the Red Bird, her mother's nephew, the young chief with whom, as a child, she had been an especial favorite? She had spoken with tenderness of their sufferings—did she know or suspect who were really to be the persons surrendered? Would she be likely to mention it if she had by chance heard that the Red Bird, the principal one among the accused, had made his escape to some distant tribe?

Monica could not tell. She scrutinized her sister's countenance—it betokened interest in the movements of one person only. The bourgeois, after busying himself for awhile about the boats, which still lay under the guard of "notr' excellent Coquillard," had loosened a little pirogue from its moorings, and was now paddling away in the direction of the trading-house.

"I confess, I never look upon that young fellow's *physique* without a feeling of envy," said Captain Lytle, speciously.

"You have less reason than most of us," said Hamilton, with a grim smile, as he glanced at his own slender, unpliant limbs.

The captain lifted his shako courteously; he was not sorry to have attention called to his personal merits, particularly as he was again venturing some slight assiduities towards Miss McGregor, in whose good graces he was desirous of reinstating himself. Her favor was important at least to his self-complacence, for he had not escaped a good deal of raillery from the mischievous Gaylord and the jolly Captain Lovel upon what they rather coarsely termed the "snubbing" that he had received at Lake Puckaway.

"I say, Lytle, was that mitten of smoked deer-skin that I saw you trying to hustle away into your pocket the other morning?" had been the cruel inquiry of the elder officer;

and, because he was the elder, Captain Lytle could only scowl as he replied,—

"Miss McGregor is a young lady of such exalted worth and dignity that I never think of making a joke upon aught touching herself or her family relationships"—a reproof which Gaylord, who originated the criticism, congratulated himself upon not having drawn upon his own head, and which Captain Lovel affected to turn off with a whistle.

Miss McGregor's manner towards Captain Lytle was this morning marked by all its former graciousness, and the gallant captain was in a state of semi-beatitude. He would have been mortified could he have divined that so far from having, as he imagined, resolved to lay aside her pique, she was not, in truth, thinking of him at all,—that she was only striving to occupy her mind with some topic that would drive away another and too agitating a one.

She started and trembled in spite of herself when the first tap of the drum announced the hour agreed upon with Mrs. Smart as that in which the whole party should repair to their rendezvous for their noontide refection.

The spot for this had, at the suggestion of Colonel Bentley, been transferred from the sutler's tent to his own spacious marquee, and thither the ladies, with their attendants, all keeping step to the cheerful strains of the "Roast Beef," were marshalled by their hospitable little hostess, and cordially invited to partake of the good cheer she had prepared for them.

The mat which did duty for a table, and over which was spread a fair damask table-cloth, was covered with an abundance of substantial viands, as well as with all the varied delicacies which the sutler's well-chosen stores afforded. But in vain did Monica endeavor to divert attention and observation from herself by seeming to partake of them. In vain did she force herself to accept and place

between her lips a small portion of something, she scarcely knew what, that somebody, she scarcely could tell who, offered her. The first morsel seemed to choke her; she could not attempt a second.

Captain Lytle was watching her, and he solicitously placed a glass of wine-and-water beside her plate. She bowed in recognition of his kindness, but did no more than taste it.

"Are you absolutely bent on fasting all this long and exciting day?" he whispered, in an accent of as much tenderness as he dared assume.

"Fasting? Oh, no," said Monica, rousing herself. "I shall make myself amends by-and-by, when all things return to their usual tranquil routine. Perhaps it is wisest for me to be a little abstinent to-day, and keep out of the hands of the doctor, with whom Mr. Gaylord has been threatening me."

This was uttered with such perfect calmness that one might have believed no breeze had ever ruffled the placid current of her feelings.

The bourgeois had by this time returned, and, declining Mrs. Smart's offered hospitality, stood at a little distance, conversing with Lapierre, who had come, at the instance of the commanding officer, to interpret what should be said on both sides during the momentous interview about to take place.

A bevy of his half-breed relatives of both sexes had also been attracted by the prospect of a *spectacle*, and were congregated just so near the marquee as to obtain a favorable view of its equipments and occupants.

The métif is by no means destitute of curiosity. By right of inheritance he is, in fact, entitled to a predominating share of that trait. The Indian character in this respect is quite misunderstood, there being, in fact, no people who

are fonder of investigating and getting at the bottom of a subject than they. The restraints of good breeding, as they understand it, are often mistaken by a superficial observer for apathy.

When the company in the marquee had feasted to their heart's content, the word of command was given by the bustling little landlady, and forthwith, by the aid of Frenchmen and soldiers, the table and all its appurtenances disappeared with a celerity that would have been incomprehensible to one not accustomed to frontier journeyings.

Preparations appropriate to the expected ceremonies were immediately on foot. The Indian allies were placed on the outer verge of the scene, seated upon the ground, and partly inclosing the space in which the expected surrender was to take place.

The soldiers of the command were drawn up on the left of the centre, in which stood the commanding officer, while those of lesser rank, and the principal gentlemen who had accompanied the expedition, were stationed a little in the rear. It seemed to be Colonel Bentley's policy to make the whole spectacle as imposing as possible.

The ladies, with M. Tremblay, Ewing, Logan, and such others as had no title to a more conspicuous position, remained in front of the colonel's marquee, which was on the right of the ground. Not far from this spot was placed the military band,—with what object neither Monica nor Madeleine, who were familiar with the customs of the natives and knew that they would be provided with their own music, could conjecture.

All the arrangements had, of course, been preconcerted, and they were carried out with that quiet military precision which causes intricate movements to seem the result of one voluntary impulse.

The two sisters watched with interest all the proceedings,

the elder scanning, almost breathlessly, each arrangement, and striving to draw from it some augury of the future intentions of those in whose hands were the issues of weal or woe, even, it might be, of life or death. Her quick eye had detected Moa-way at a distance, stationed with apparent unconcern among the Menomonees, who, with the Waubanakees, sat like dusky statues, silent and motionless.

While speculating whence he had come and wherefore he was there, Miss McGregor was startled by hearing an exclamation in French near her,—

"There they come! See their silver-works glittering in the sun! And look! the flags that they have fastened to their lances. Now they are filing out of the woods, and descending the hill!"

The voice was from a group of métive women who had pressed quite near where the young ladies stood.

Monica turned her eyes towards the road that, leading across the Portage from the Wisconsin, approached the western front of the encampment. It was by this road that the Winnebago chiefs, with their accused brethren, were expected to arrive, two hours after the sun should have reached the meridian.

Yes, there they were! A glittering procession on foot, with a mixed crowd of both sexes following in the rear.

Gaze as intently as she might, it was impossible for Monica to recognize with certainty even the foremost individual of the train. A mist was before her eyes—a drumming sound in her ears. She thought her senses were becoming paralyzed. Others in her immediate neighborhood were at no loss. The explanations of Madame Lapierre, in her accustomed dialect, enlightened the curious and inquisitive who stood near.

"The one in advance is Naw-kaw, or Kar-ray-mau-nee, as they call him. Of course he takes the lead—he is the

principal chief of the Puans, you know. How straight and tall he is! And how he walks like a young man full of strength and vigor! Yet he is, they say, almost a hundred years old."

"Naw-kaw—Le Bois—he may well be named, for he looks like one of the giant trees of the forest."

"But those who are coming next, dressed in white,—who are they?" asked one, less *au fait* than the first speaker.

"Oh, those are the persons who are about to give themselves up. They put on white as a token they are innocent; that is to say, that they had no evil intentions."

"Ah! mon Dieu! but people don't kill and scalp with good intentions, par exemple!"

"Hist! listen!" exclaimed Madame Lapierre; "hearken to the music."

There was a sudden hush, and then clear above drum and shee-shee-quois,* by which it was accompanied, rose a wild, dismal wail, prolonged into a chaunt, which, vibrating through the soft, sunny air, seemed in a moment to turn all light and cheerfulness to gloom.

"What is that? Whose voice is it?" asked Madeleine, awe-struck.

"It is Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, the Red Bird, singing his *death-song*."

The sudden start of Monica, and the look of speechless horror which she turned upon her, for a moment set Madeleine's senses whirling. She could scarcely command herself sufficiently to throw her arms around her sister to keep her from falling. Fortunately there was a camp-stool near, upon which she drew her, and, placing her-

* The Indian rattle.

self so as to screen her from observation, she beckoned the bourgeois and asked him to bring her a glass of water.

"My sister feels overcome—she is not strong," she stammered. Mrs. Hale's bottle of camphor, without which she seldom stirred, was at once proffered.

"Lean against me, dear," said Madeleine, her frame trembling and her eyes full of tears. She took the glass of water which Logan brought and put it to her sister's lips, but Monica rejected it with a wave of the hand, setting her teeth firmly to repress all outward sign of emotion, though she could not control the shiver that convulsed her frame.

"Did you not know that the Red Bird was to surrender himself?" Monica shook her head slowly. She could not utter the "No, ah! no," which her gesture implied.

By this time the procession had arrived at the opposite bank of the river whither the barges of the officers had been sent with an escort to ferry the principal personages across. Suddenly, from the midst of the latter, as they stood grouped upon the shore, there arose a mournful, long-drawn, unearthly yell—a cry, once heard, never to be forgotten—a sound to curdle one's very blood.

At its sound each Menomonee and Waubanakee sprang to his feet and instinctively clutched his weapon. The cry was a second time repeated.

"The scalp-whoop! Two of them!" exclaimed Ewing.

"Two scalps? Surely they are not bringing their terrible trophies into our midst," said Logan.

"Two scalps *to be given*, not taken," explained Madame Glode. "Saint Baptême! The poor Oiseau Rouge and Soleil know their doom, and tell us they are prepared for it."

"And only two," remarked another, in a complaining accent. "To think of the third running off like a coward and saving his scalp! Le misérable!"

CHAPTER XLVI.

ALL eyes were now turned to the brow of the hill, in anxious expectation of what was to follow.

There was a stir and a murmur as the procession, which had been broken in being ferried across the stream, and again formed to ascend the hill, at length emerged upon the plain.

The stalwart form of old Kar-ray-mau-nee, in the full extent of savage holiday costume, and with face elaborately painted, led the way. He bore in his hand the United States flag, thus signifying his recognition of the authority to which he and his companions were paying such a heart-rending tribute of obedience. Behind him walked the accused, again chaunting their death-song, to which the tap of the Indian drum kept time and added a mournful effect. The crowd which followed, consisting of chiefs and braves, remained in the background with a few women, silent spectators of the proceedings.

"The magnificent Red Bird" has been described by one biographer as "perfect in form, face, and gesture." Another witness of these scenes, from whose manuscript journal many particulars have been drawn, thus records his testimony:—

"Of all men upon whom my eyes have ever rested, the most splendid in beauty, the most noble and graceful in movement, was the Red Bird of the Winnebagoes. Wee-kau looked the wretch that he was, but I could never for a moment admit the idea that Wau-nig-sootsh-kah was, intentionally, guilty of anything more heinous than being found in bad company."

Wee-kau, with his dogged, downcast countenance, and wrapped in his blanket, which had not even the merit of cleanliness, engaged less sympathy than his coming fate might seem to demand. It was upon the beautiful young chief that every eye was riveted.

His dress and equipments had been chosen with strict attention to the emblematic significance with which his people express their sentiments or describe their past exploits.

His Sioux dress,* a shirt and leggings of delicate white deer-skin, betokening the purity of innocence, was ornamented with porcupine-quills, and with beads and feathers of the color of the sky where dwells the Great Spirit, and to which the wearer was, to all appearance, hastening.†

His gorget of scarlet cloth, and the tufts of horse-hair dyed the same color, with which various parts of his dress were ornamented, represented the plumage of the oriole, from which he derived his name; the eagle's feathers depending from his shoulders and from the red stem of his war-pipe denoted that he had met the enemy and brought back a corresponding number of scalps; while a cord looped at his belt indicated that his prowess had at times been tempered with mercy, and that he had brought home captive those whom he had not cared to slay. Slips of wood, placed in the form of a pair of compasses upon his breast, proclaimed the number of gunshot-wounds he had received in the achievement of his exploits.

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* The Sioux have ever been linked in the closest amity with the Winnebagoes, and it was customary with the former, who were peculiarly skilled in the arts of the toilet, to present a holiday suit to a friend or favorite.

† The Winnebagoes always "look aloft" while uttering their prayers or incantations or performing their sacrifices—thus recognizing that the dwelling of the Great Spirit is beyond the clouds.

His necklace of panther's claws, and the heavy and abundant strands of wampum, the price of the furs and robes which had rewarded his winter hunts, attested his triumphs in the chase. He was without arms: even the ornamented knife-scabbard, usually hanging from his neck, had been laid aside.

Every portion of his dress fitted closely to his symmetrical form, save a light, fringed blanket of white deer-skin, which, thrown back from his shoulders, hung with a careless grace like the cloak of a Spanish hidalgo. His waist was girded with a variegated sash, supporting his pouch of the entire skin of a young otter, richly embroidered with quills and beads.

Monica's agitation had wellnigh got the better of her self-command, as she observed that a spreading white eagle's feather laid across his breast was resting against the broad scarlet ribbon she had sent him as a token by the hand of *Le Bras Piqué*.

She could not tell whether he recognized her, half screened from view as she sat; with a woman's devotion, she hoped he did not. She would have had no additional burden laid upon him; yet the sudden ceasing of his death-song almost assured her that she had not escaped his notice. He looked straight before him, however, after the first rapid glance around, with all the apparent stoicism of his people, until the military band struck up, as if in response to his strain, the plaintive, dirge-like notes of Pleyel's German Hymn. Then the face of the Red Bird grew more sombre, as did those of the whole assembled multitude—veteran officer and hardy soldier alike testifying their sympathy by tears which would not be controlled.

Kar-ray-mau-nee and the two prisoners, for such they must now be considered, approached with proud and stately step till they faced the commanding officer, who, familiar

with their customs, motioned them to seat themselves and smoke.

The regal elegance of Red Bird's whole person, the grace of his motions, his noble bearing under circumstances so trying, were the theme of comment among the more thoughtless of the beholders; but the greater number, spell-bound, regarded in solemn silence a spectacle so unaccustomed and so touching.

Madeleine, divided between solicitude for her sister and sympathy with the scene before her, was almost unconscious that the bourgeois, observant of her pallid look and tearful eye, had drawn her arm within his own, as a support, and was holding an umbrella to shield her and her sister from the sun.

After smoking their kinnikinnick for a time, the aged chief and his two companions again rose to their feet, each with his long-stemmed pipe in his left hand, and Wau-nig-sootsh-kah grasping in his right the white flag, the emblem of innocence.

Kar-ray-mau-nee was the first to address the commanding officer—his "Father" for the time being.

His speech was to this effect: "That the chiefs had been required to bring in those of their people who had been accused of murder. That they had no power except over two, the third having gone away. That these two had voluntarily surrendered themselves, to save their brethren from harm and their country from devastation. They had come here to give themselves up; and they hoped their white friends would accept the horses they offered (about twenty in number), in compensation for the lives that had been taken."

The latter proposition was strictly in accordance with Indian usage. These sons of the forest must be pardoned for deeming it possible that, with the white man, tears for

a bereavement might be wiped away by a goodly array of presents.

A few sentences in reply from the commanding officer, commending the action of the accused in surrendering themselves for trial, and assuring them of kind treatment and equitable dealing on the part of the Government, followed.

After a short pause, the Red Bird advanced a pace or two. Looking fixedly at Colonel Bentley for a moment, then throwing a glance round on the assembled multitude, he said,—

"I am ready. Do not put me in irons. It is only a coward who needs to be fettered, for it is only a coward who runs away. I am a man—let me be free. I have given my life—it is gone—thus!" He stooped and gathered some particles of the dust at his feet, then, placing the ends of his gathered fingers against his thumb, he threw them abroad into the air with that peculiar gesture which is, among his people, the expression of utter contempt.*

"It is gone!" looking at the dust as it floated a moment in the air. "I would not take it back!"

With one more emphatic gesture of scorn, he then marched forward, fronting the commanding officer breast to breast, and looking him fearlessly in the eye.

Wee-kau, with sordid, wolfish visage and stealthy, treacherous step, followed, but attempted no word of address or supplication. His whole appearance inspired a feeling of shuddering repulsion in the beholders, for the story was now well known of his having first scalped the

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* No greater insult can be offered to an Indian than the snapping of the fingers towards them in the manner described, save only the opprobrious epithet "Dog!"

infant of Madame Gagnier and then made an ineffectual attempt to behead it.

The platoons of soldiers were wheeled forward so as to form a lane, through which the prisoners, with the commanding officer at their head, walked in the direction of the tent prepared for the former, where they were to be well guarded till they could be transferred to their place of destination.

The termination of the ceremonies was the signal for a general rally of the officers around Colonel Bentley's marquee.

Madeleine did all in her power to avert attention from her sister, who had, throughout, sat with stony gaze, too much stunned to fully realize the force of the blow which had fallen upon her.

"Please make no remark to her, and, if possible, prevent others from doing so," said the young girl to Ewing. "You are aware that the Red Bird is our relative. I have seldom seen him since my childhood, but Monica and he were formerly on terms of intimate friendship."

It was at a venture that Madeleine hazarded this remark, for she had never heard of the blight upon her sister's early life. She only saw that she was suffering intensely, and believed that the distress of such a fate being the allotment of one so gifted, one so well fitted to uphold the honor and dignity of her oppressed people, was the bitter trouble that was overwhelming her.

To save her from question or comment, Madeleine felt, would now be the most valued kindness.

It was with a feeling of relief that she observed the chiefs and braves approaching, and addressing to her sister earnest salutations in their guttural, many-syllabled vernacular. She did not pause to inquire why their greetings to herself were less demonstrative—why a simple shake

of the hand and a calm "Bon-jour, P'hee-ween-kah,"* were all that any one seemed inclined to bestow.

It was enough for her to observe that Monica roused herself from the apathy to which she had yielded, and that she now discoursed with her native friends in the low, silvery tones which made even their uncouth dialect musical.

Presently the most prominent of the chiefs were called away to receive the rations and presents with which the commanding officer thought it politic to mark his approbation of their share in the transactions which had taken place. Miss McGregor's lip curled with scorn as she witnessed their obedience to the summons.

"And they will accept the price of his blood!" she said, bitterly, to herself. "Was it with this intention that they counselled him to this surrender? Oh, faithless, selfish, despicable! Had they been animated by hearts like that of one weak woman, they would have died a thousand deaths sooner than sacrifice that noble life!"

Her look was not lost upon Madame Lapierre. She understood it, and, tenacious for her husband's people, hastened to make excuses:—

"Ah! it *is* a pity—it is very grievous; but what would you have? The poor savages have been hiding away, or else roaming about so long, in dread of the soldiers, who might be upon us at any moment, that their women and little children would starve if their Great Father did not take compassion on them and supply them with food. The excellent Monsieur le Collo-nèll!"

But Monica was not appeased. What to her was the well-being of all the women and children of the Winnebago tribe, compared with the life and liberty of Wau-nig-sootsh-

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* Good-day, pretty little one.

kah? The gloom of her thoughts was not lessened as she overheard a part of a dialogue near her.

"I was glad to hear that Colonel Bentley had promised the prisoners they should not be put in irons," said Mr. Ewing.

"Yes, the colonel could make that engagement as far as he is himself concerned," replied Captain Lovel; "but wait till you hear from old White Beaver. He may sing a different song."

"Old White Beaver! Who is he?"

"General Atkinson, who is now on his way up the Wisconsin. The poor fellows give him this name because, as they say, he has dammed up their only way of escape from our pursuit."

"Do you imagine he will be less lenient than Colonel Bentley to the prisoners?" asked Ewing.

"I rather fancy so. It may depend somewhat upon whether he detects any disposition on the part of their friends to communicate with them and contrive plans for their escape."

This hint was not lost on Miss McGregor. She had quite determined to supplicate the commanding officer for leave to visit the Red Bird in his confinement; she longed to soothe and comfort him with hopes of what she might be able to accomplish before his day of trial should arrive; but she now understood that true kindness forbade any steps towards obtaining an interview until, the journey to the Prairie having been accomplished, the course of events should show what could wisely be undertaken in behalf of the unhappy Wau-nig-sootsh-kah.

PART II.

MARK LOGAN, THE BOURGEOIS.

CHAPTER XLVII.

"And now, having caged our bird, which, we must own, boasts a greater resemblance to the Royal Eagle than to the little warbler whose name he bears, what is to be our next move?"

The querist was Lieutenant Stafford, who, with his chief, had sauntered towards the western verge of the parade-ground, and now stood looking down upon the ladies' boat as it lay in the narrow, crooked stream, waiting to take up its march across the portage, to the Wisconsin.

A numerous force of engagés was employed in raising the little craft, and, by the aid of sundry couples of stout oxen, dragging it from its bed, preparatory to mounting it on wheels for its transit.

Trooping away in the distance over the Portage road was the company of Winnebagoes who had *assisted* at the recent ceremony—the men marching stately at their leisure, or pacing on their jerky little ponies, the women bending under the weight of the provisions and other benefactions bestowed by the commanding officer.

A few squaws and papooses from the lodges scattered here and there over the low ground were contemplating, with longing eyes, a heap of *butin* which lay upon the grass, and over which old Michaud kept a watchful eye

while giving the word of command, whooping, "*sacré*"-ing, and "*soulève-là*"-ing with the full force of his lungs, by way of putting life and mettle into the muscles of all concerned.

"Our next move? Of course, to deliver our prisoners over to the merciful arm of the law; in other words, clap them in jail," was the nonchalant reply of Captain Lytle.

"What a pity!—for the Red Bird, at least," said the younger officer. "I gather from the interpreter that there are doubts as to his having actually participated in the murders. It is to be hoped he will be granted a speedy trial; for imprisonment is a punishment far worse than death, to one of his nature and habits. How much better to have called a court-martial and tried them here at once, that their fate might be settled and they spared the tortures of uncertainty!"

"You forget the sacred majesty of the law which has to be vindicated," said Lytle, with mock gravity.

"And should not we have been vindicators of the law?" asked Stafford.

"Our own trade," replied the captain, "being to take the lives of our enemies, we might be in danger of winking at the exploits of other warriors when on their path."

"Not if they should be proved guilty of slaughtering the innocent!"

"Uncle Sam would not trust us. Besides, the present happens to be a time when something very prompt and business-like has got to be done. A good many miserable white devils have escaped deserved punishment of late; of course, the public good demands that the most should be made of a prey that understands nothing about chicanery, bribery, and all that sort of thing, but can submit quietly to their sentence, as good criminals should. I rather think our neighbors down below will have to hang L'Oiseau

Rouge and his dirty friend, if only to show what officials can do, when they have no special reason for not doing."

Stafford, whose feelings were strongly enlisted in behalf of the young chief, was not pleased at the light, bantering tone in which the elder officer spoke. He changed the subject a little, by asking,—

"Are they to be taken to the Bay?"

"I fancy not. It will naturally be considered the best policy to try them on the spot where the deeds were committed—where witnesses are to be found who can testify against them, and where there will be no trouble in empaneling a jury who will be of one mind in the matter of a verdict."

"Doubtless public opinion is greatly inflamed against the Red Bird. Near the scene of action it will perhaps even be difficult to find an advocate who will labor strenuously for his acquittal."

"Very likely. I don't suppose there are many who will concern themselves about the fate of a couple of Neechees more or less. There are plenty of them, in my opinion, who had better be got rid of, if a pretext is only furnished."

"Would you wish to see them exterminated?" said the young officer, turning on his companion a look of indignant surprise.

"Why, that is putting it rather strong," replied the other; "but I confess I have not greatly wondered at our fellow-citizens in Kentucky who vote for Colonel Dick Johnson on the ground of his being the best *Indian-killer* in the United States."

"It may do for the people of Kentucky and Ohio to remember their own wrongs and forget those of the former proprietors of all that beautiful domain. Those who are differently situated should recall the oppression and persecution which a helpless people has had to suffer at the

hands of the whites. In my opinion, our Government has a great deal to answer for——"

"You seem to feel considerably more upon the subject," interrupted Captain Lytle, sarcastically, "than pretty little Miss McGregor, who is their cousin."

"May-be so," quietly remarked Stafford; "but not more than her sister. How beautiful she looked this afternoon as she sat gazing on that magnificent fellow, her rapt soul sitting in her eyes, utterly lost to all outward things! I could not help wishing that some poet or sculptor could have caught her expression and attitude."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Captain Lytle, veiling under an expression of contempt his real annoyance; for he too had been struck with the devotion of Miss McGregor's gaze, and with her look of despairing woe, which could hardly be misinterpreted.

The young lieutenant went on,—

"Wau-nig-sootsh-kah may comfort himself with the certainty that there is one who will leave no stone unturned to secure his release."

"The release or the condemnation of this Puan," said the captain, with a grimace of disgust, "can be a matter of no consequence to the young lady, about whom it strikes me you are speculating rather freely, except so far as his fate appeals to her benevolent sympathies. If you have amused yourself with fancying any other sentiment connected with the compassionate interest she manifested in a painted, bedizened aboriginal who has got himself into a tolerably uncomfortable position, I must say, you pay an indifferent compliment to her delicacy or her good sense."

"My estimate of the good sense, or, rather, the good heart, of the young lady," replied Stafford, calmly, "was not based alone upon what I witnessed this afternoon, but also upon Miss Madeleine's remark in explanation of the

agitation which, at one time, so nearly overcame her sister —that the Red Bird was a relative for whom she had long entertained a tender friendship."

Every word of the lieutenant was gall and wormwood to the irate captain. Had the inquiry been again addressed to him, "Would you wish to see them exterminated?" he would have felt inclined to answer, "With all my heart—every mother's son of them!"

It would be giving Stafford the advantage, however, to let him perceive that his words had power to sting. The captain controlled his wrath, and turned to another phase of the same subject:—

"Speaking of the young ladies, we may as well ascertain if they are going over to the trading-house to remain till all things are ready for them to take boat again on the Wisconsin. I think I heard Ewing say that was the plan; and I see they have got their tent down and most of their effects carried already to the landing below, to be ferried across. As for the friendship between Miss McGregor and this young chief," he said, returning to the subject, "that is perfectly natural. Brought up as they have been to regard each other as relations, his probable fate must be a source of deep pain to her. Any liking of a more tender character is not a supposable possibility—as little so as that her pretty sister should take a fancy to that young engagé, bourgeois, boss, or whatever his title is. He seems to be as much of a paragon in his way as the Winnebago in his."

Having thus, as he flattered himself, paid his subaltern in his own coin, the captain took up his line of march towards the spot where the tent of the young ladies had stood, but where now remained only a few packs, kettles, and the usual débris which mark a deserted camp.

"Ah! Miss Monique have just say to me dat we go not

away to Lapierre till we have say good-by to Monsieur le Capitaine," was the salutation of M. Tremblay; and the suggestion that he had been thus remembered made the gallant captain all smiles and devotion. Not that he was quite at his ease. His own observation would, without the aid of Stafford's comments, have made him a little solicitous as to the nature of the fair Monica's regard for the young chief. Interest in the misfortunes of one who possesses the additional recommendations of heroism, grace, and beauty is, to say the least, a dangerous sentiment; there is no saying at what moment benevolence may take the wings of romance and soar aloft, a full-fledged passion.

Captain Lytle did not mean to trust to the chance of any such metamorphosis. He congratulated himself on having already received from Colonel Bentley an invitation to continue as volunteer aide until the termination of the expedition. Miss McGregor might, and doubtless would, plan to obtain an interview with her cousin. It should be his care that no such interview should be granted her; and, the prisoners once placed under the charge of General Atkinson, let those play at romance who could find a chance to do so. That Miss McGregor had entertained the most favorable sentiments towards himself at one time he felt sure. If the personal danger of friends of earlier date had occupied her thoughts of late to the exclusion of other considerations, it should be his business to fan anew the flame which, for a short season, had slumbered. He could not yield the position he had of late occupied; on the contrary, he would now set about winning her in earnest. With intentions and plans of action thus fully settled, Captain Lytle addressed Miss McGregor with an air of sympathizing interest:—

"Will you allow me to escort you to the boat which is,

I understand, to take you over presently to the trading-house?"

Monica bowed. She was struck by the respectful tenderness of his tone. She had been casting about for some means of gaining permission from the commanding officer to speak at least a few words of encouragement and consolation to Wau-nig-sootsh-kah; Captain Lytle would interest himself to gratify her wishes; she had only to ask him.

Before she could frame the words in terms which would awake no suspicion of her motives, Lieutenant Stafford began,—

"It is not pleasant for friends—acquaintances I ought, perhaps, rather to say—to feel that they must say farewell; it may be, farewell forever——"

The cheerful voice of the captain interrupted him:—

"I do not make myself unhappy by forestalling the melancholy hour, which, I am happy to know, is not immediate. The colonel having graciously continued me upon his staff until his return to head-quarters, I have liberty, for the time being, to offer my services to the ladies in any way I can be useful to them."

A sudden light flashed into the eyes of Miss McGregor. The captain perceived and misinterpreted it, as did Madeleine. The gentleman, however, gave no sign, but went on with what he was saying:—

"We are to set forward immediately. Lapierre has boats over in the Wisconsin, which he has put at the disposal of the command, and the colonel thinks it best to hurry forward in order to meet General Atkinson beyond the Barribault villages, thus securing himself against any possible assault——"

He stopped, with sudden recollection.

"Immediately? This afternoon? But *we* shall not be ready!" cried Miss McGregor, with a look of dismay.

"Surely Colonel Bentley will not push on without us! It must not be. Somebody must go and hurry Logan and Lapierre about our transportation."

She spoke so earnestly that the captain looked still more gratified and her sister more surprised and troubled.

"If you think the guns and ammunition require an additional guard," Madeleine began——

"Be under no apprehension," said Captain Lytle, gently. "Colonel Bentley, you may be sure, will make as much a point as heretofore of keeping you close under our wing. But, from what I have observed of the proceedings of your enterprising employés, I doubt not your boats will be ready to leave at the same moment as ours—early to-morrow morning at farthest."

Great diligence in preparation being thus incumbent on all concerned, Miss McGregor saw that she must defer the proposed interview with the young chief for yet awhile. Accordingly, she and her sister, escorted by their military attendants and M. Tremblay, crossed the parade-ground and descended to the little landing below the sutler's tent. The bourgeois was there waiting for them with a canoe, which he had brought from the trading-house.

Before stepping on board, Miss McGregor gave, in a low tone, to one of the engagés who stood near, laden with bundles and packages, a message, which he in turn transmitted to a comrade who at the moment was paddling a pirogue towards the farther landing to gather up the remaining *butin*.

"Quien, Valentin! Va crier ce Courte-Oreille, Le Loup, là-haut. Dis-lui de venir à l'autre bord chez Monsieur Glode, tout d'suite—not' demoiselle a besoin de lui parler. Qu'il se presse—dans le plus bref—sans s'amuser."

Which may be translated,—

"See here, Valentine! go and find that Ottawa, The

Wolf (Moa-way). Tell him the young lady wants him over at Lapierre's. Bid him hurry, without stopping to play."

CHAPTER XLVIII.

It would be no easy matter, Miss McGregor well knew, for the boats to pursue their course down the Wisconsin under shadow of night, the channel being changeful and indirect, owing to the shoals and small islands with which the river abounds.

Yet, wholly occupied with the plan she had now in her mind, she would have had Logan give the word to proceed, the moment all had crossed the portage and were settled on board.

A more timid person might have held back, from fear of ambuscades, or possibly open onslaught, from the friends of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah; Monica, on the contrary, was ready to brave whatever perils might beset her path.

The impatience of the young lady now to hurry forward, when but a few hours ago she had made a point of remaining in his vicinity, would have puzzled Captain Lytle not a little; but doubly would he have been mortified could he have divined that from the first he had formed no feature in her plans except as an auxiliary for the rescue of "that Puan," as he had spitefully denominated the Red Bird.

With the caprice of a heart almost in despair, Miss McGregor had turned to a new device even before parting with her military escort at the little landing. The object with which she had summoned Moa-way to the house of Lapierre had been, that she might dispatch him across the hills to the village of Day-kau-ray, at which spot, she had

ascertained, Tshah-nee-kah, the father-in-law of the Red Bird, now was. She hoped that since the cruel, cowardly chief had contrived to evade the penalty due to his complicity in the butcheries at the Prairie, he would lend his aid to some scheme by which he could, without danger to himself, effect the release of his son-in-law. She had accordingly, by her messenger, enjoined upon him to meet her at a designated spot on their route, that they might together concert measures for the accomplishment of the end she had in view.

In order to secure an interview of sufficient length, she was, therefore, urgent with the bourgeois to set forth without delay. Great was her astonishment at being met, not with hesitation merely, but with a resolute denial of her request. The language of the young man was courteous, but it was decided, as he announced his determination to pass the night at only a few furlongs' distance from the point of embarkation on the Wisconsin.

"I have given my word to Colonel Bentley," Logan said, "that I will keep within hail of the detachment he has sent over to guard the boats, throughout the night."

"Are his soldiers afraid? Do they want us poor citizens to take care of them?" asked Miss McGregor, scornfully.

"I fancy the commanding officer has still misgivings that the Winnebagoes may attempt to possess themselves of the arms and ammunition which we carry, and, by their aid, undertake the rescue of their friends," replied the bourgeois.

"Well, after all, we are not under military rule," argued Miss McGregor. "What right has Colonel Bentley to be giving us orders? I am perfectly willing to assume the responsibility of prosecuting our journey, in any way and at any time we may see fit."

"But *I* can hardly undertake the responsibility of breaking the pledge I have given him," said Logan.

"You are supposed to act under my orders," persisted the young lady. "The blame, if any, will rest upon me."

"Pardon me, madam," said the young man, drawing himself up with an air which Miss McGregor thought quite out of place in a bourgeois, "I do not so understand it." Then, as if recollecting himself, he added,—

"The commanding officer has overlooked one act of disobedience on our part, and we must not forget that we are between two fires—the command at this place, and the troops of General Atkinson farther down the river. I cannot answer it to my chief, Mr. McGregor, who is, I am told, always careful to preserve the best relations with the military, if I am a second time instrumental in setting Government officers at defiance."

Not quite discouraged, Monica next had recourse to her sister:—

"I wish, Madeleine, you would persuade that young man to set off at once. He will not refuse, I dare say, if *you* ask him. We need but move on fifteen or twenty miles, to a point where we can be more quiet and safe than here. You must see how unpleasant this neighborhood will be—soldiers coming and going—the woods around filled with Indian lodges! You have always seemed anxious to escape both the one and the other."

"Yes, that is very true—I have never liked them much; that is, I had rather be quiet and retired, as you say. But what is the bourgeois' objection to going?"

"Oh, he pretends to feel bound by some promise he made to Colonel Bentley. As if the bourgeois of an outfit was the responsible party! What does he expect would happen to *him?* What could Colonel Bentley do to *him?*"

"It is no consideration of that kind, you may depend,"

said Madeleine, coloring. "But if Mr. Logan has given his word, he is, of course, bound to keep it."

"Which means, that you will not oblige me," said Miss McGregor, with a glance half scornful, half indignant. Madeleine turned away.

There was yet another person to whom arguments could be addressed—old Michaud. If he could only be made to believe that the safety of the cargoes depended upon their putting a certain number of miles between themselves and the moody savages who were congregated near this point, and, for aught they knew, were engaged at this moment in counselling and plotting! But Michaud proved as impracticable as the others.

"The men had toiled *so hard* all day in dragging boats and carrying packs! Harder than the oxen of M. Glode, *par exemple!* They must have their rest now. Two *pipes*, three *pipes* were not much, perhaps, when the men were fresh—oh, no—a mere trifle. But in the night, after a hard day's work, voyez-vous—c'est toute autre chose!"

Monica, baffled and chagrined, could only betake herself to her couch in bitterness of spirit, and evil were the angels she entertained while devising some means of requiting the bourgeois and her sister for their share in her disappointment.

The scheme she had so hastily matured in her own mind had promised so well! It had seemed so feasible, so almost certain of accomplishment!

Tshah-nee-kah, she had not doubted, would accept her rendezvous; she would have contrived, by aid of a canoe which Moa-way, as on a former occasion, would have had in readiness, to leave the boat, under cover of the darkness, and meet the old chief at the appointed place. She would have pleaded with him by every consideration of fidelity and gratitude to the young hero who had taken upon him-

self to suffer in his stead; or, if need were, she would have worked upon his fears by hints of what she affected to know of his own culpability. Moa-way would be her protection while she ventured upon such a menace, and while she suggested a possibility of the May-yah-hat-tee-rah (Big Knives) remaining in the Winnebago country until the third accomplice in the Gagnier murders should be surrendered. Thus she would have stimulated him till he should have yielded a promise to do all in his power for the rescue of his friend; even, if need were, to follow the example of the famous warrior Kish-kil-wah, and, disguising himself as a bear or deer, to venture into the vicinity of the next evening's encampment, draw off the attention of officers and guards, who, eager for the chase, would leave the coast comparatively clear and give the prisoners a chance to creep from their tent, gain the water, and swim like otters to a place of safety, beyond all danger of pursuit.

Such had been the stratagem which Monica had devised. She had even planned how she should play her part in the first moments of discovery, by sending forth her own shrieks of pretended alarm, and adding to the confusion which should hinder effectual pursuit. But now all her schemes were scattered to the winds. There remained scarcely a hope for Wau-nig-sootsh-kah.

Tshah-nee-kah would go to the appointed place of meeting; he would fail to find her there; he would wait in vain for her; he would believe himself deceived, or he would fear being betrayed; he would take, as he had already done, the *safe* side, and leave the Red Bird to his fate.

There was yet one chance; a slender one, it is true, but still a chance. It was barely possible that the voyageurs, by encouraging praises and secret promises of reward, of neither of which she would be sparing, might be induced to press forward with more than usual vigor on the follow-

ing morning, and, by getting a sufficient distance in advance of the other fleet, gain for her a half-hour's time, for a conference with the old chief. This possibility was now her only hope.

Disdaining all reply to remark, inquiry, or offer of kindness from her sister, Monica buried herself in silence, if not in slumber.

CHAPTER XLIX.

She did slumber at length, spite of the griefs and vicissitudes of the preceding hours. Her dreams, as was natural, were but a succession of sad and troubled changes.

Now she was in a canoe, striving to overtake Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, that she might warn him of evil threatened him by Captain Lytle; yet, paddle as she might, with all her strength and skill, her canoe kept constantly retreating instead of going forward. She saw with agony the distance increasing between them; soon he would be out of sight altogether! She tried to raise her voice, to call and apprise him of his danger; but a hoarseness seemed to have come upon her, and she could not, with her most despairing efforts, utter a sound. Then the scene changed, and she was marching along with a crowd, as it seemed, to some military spectacle; such a long, weary way that she was nigh fainting with fatigue. All at once she discovered that the scene to be enacted was the execution of the Red Bird. There, "gaunt and grim," before her stood the apparatus by which his life was to be terminated! She tried to sign to the executioner to stop; she seemed to wave aloft a paper which some one had thrust into her hand, when suddenly Captain Lytle, whom she now perceived to be

walking by her side, drew her shawl over her head and face, whispering, "You must not look that way." She struggled to free herself—to call for aid from the crowd, when a loud shout announced that all was over, and, instead of a dirge, a band stationed near struck up a lively air.

At this point illusion gave place to reality. The shout was the clear, ringing call of the bourgeois to his men,—"How! how! how!" and the music, that of the drum and fife, approaching nearer and nearer, and indicating the arrival of another detachment of the military, doubtless the one which had charge of the prisoners.

Monica sprang from her couch, and hastened to arrange her dress. She might, possibly, see Wau-nig-sootsh-kah again! She might even exchange a sentence or two with him! In the hurry and bustle of embarking, who would notice, or, rather, who would interfere to prevent, a movement on her part of sympathy and condolence with the unfortunate? And in the few words she might find means to whisper, how much might be conveyed!

Transported with these thoughts as she hurriedly completed her toilet, she was totally unobservant of other sounds which fell gratefully on the ear of her more attentive sister; the calls from boat to boat of their own little fleet,—the shouts and orders to the different clerks in charge,—the responsive "oui, oui, mon bourgeois," in tones equally sonorous,—the grating of the keel beneath them on its sandy bed,—the cries of "whoop là! pousse', pousse', —Ah! le voilà!—whoop! whoop! arrache', nos gens,—who-o-o-p!"

"Ah!" said Madeleine, with a sigh of relief, "we are off. That is good. I was so much afraid we would have to breakfast here among all these people."

Throwing up the canvas curtain in spite of the remon-

strances of her sister, Miss McGregor saw that they were indeed afloat. With a little more "*Scie, scie*"-ing and *Prenez garde là*"-ing, the boats were presently gliding through the water, and the foremost crew, having gained the channel, were lilting forth,—

"Je fis demand-e à ma mèr-e
Un remède à mon talon;
Ma mèr-e fit répons-e
Un carotte me serait bon.
Un carotte, ça me frotte,
Pour un remèd-e, pour un remèd'
A mon talon."*

As their own boat turned from its moorings, Miss McGregor threw herself upon a seat, gazing in gloomy disappointment towards the spot at which the detachment was just arriving.

She saw a company of officers and soldiers, and, marching in their midst, the lithe and graceful form of the Red Bird, with the miserable Wee-kau by his side. It was but for a moment; the boat rounded the point of an island to gain a deeper channel, and officers, soldiers, and prisoners were shut out from her view.

"The fates are ever against me," said she, bitterly, to herself. Yet she had little cause to complain of their obduracy when a few more hours had gone by.

Michaud had had compunctious twinges as he recalled the woe-begone look of his young lady on the previous evening, and he now resolved to atone for his inflexibility.

Since getting ahead of "*messieurs les soldats*"—towards

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*I asked of my mother a cure for my heel;
She answered me that a carrot was good.
A carrot rubs, however,
As a cure for my heel.

whom the old voyageur had, by virtue of his vocation, a standing grudge—was the question, Miss McGregor should have no cause for complaint this day. No—if the men should pull "*à déboîter les épaules,*" the young lady's pleasure should be done.

Accordingly, the kind-hearted hivernant cut all hands short with their morning's pipe (their *meal* could never be curtailed), in order that he might put himself *en vedette* and make the strokes of his men keep time to the most animating and hilarious songs of his whole repertory.

If at any time the crews showed a disposition to relax in their speed, the voice of their leader would be heard, like a clarion, cheering or gibing as the case might require.

"Arrache', arrache', nos gens—pour la pipe, pour la pipe. Whoop-là! Sacré mon diable! ne dormez-pas! ar-ra-chez donc!"

Madeleine would fain have lingered a little on their course, to take in with fuller enjoyment the successive beauties of the landscape,—the varied outline of the shore, now bold and crowned with primeval forests or frowning in rugged battlements, now swelling in waves of green turf, brilliant in the rays of the morning sun; here the cliff with face variegated fantastically, like mammoth mosaic, anon a cluster of islets reflecting in the watery mirror their fringes of sturdy oak, with the silver-stemmed, feathery birch, the trumpet-shaped elm, and dark cedar intermingled; or, most attractive of all, a jutting headland, on which might be seen the deer coming at this early hour to slake their thirst, then, starting, scared away by the sound of the oars and the song of the boatmen.

There was no relaxing in old Michaud, no letting up, beyond the solace of a single pipe, as he kept on with his apparently interminable refrain,—

"Je fis demand-e à ma mère
Un remède à mon talon ;
Ma mèr-e fit répons-e
Un navot me serait bon.
Un navot,
C'est trop gros ;
Un oignon,
C'est trop ronde ;
Du persil,
Ça me chatouille ;
Un carotte,
Ça me frotte,
Pour un remède à mon talon,"

and so on, through all the varieties of vegetable nature, until the little fleet drew near the spot for which his young lady had, the night before, pleaded as their stopping-place.

Miss McGregor was advertised of their approach to it by a shrill whoop from a distance, promptly responded to by a shout from the bourgeois as he sprang to the bow of the boat, looking anxiously forward.

Monica did not need the explanation given in reply to M. Tremblay's timid inquiry, "Who dat sauvage là?"

"It is the Ottawa, Moa-way, I think. How he comes here is more than I can conjecture."

"Ah! le Courte-Oreille—M. le Loup! Mon Dieu! how dese wile beasts do have dere contrivement of cunning! And in a canot, too, and coming from de oder way! Eh! bien certainement, nobody never can do such ting widout de deb' do help wid his horse's foot!"

And the poor Monsieur shot out his huge under-lip and bent his brows in troubled perplexity.

"I shall have to ask the favor of you, Mr. Logan, to make a little halt at the point of land just below," said Miss McGregor, in a tone rather of command than request. "Give the men, if you please, a somewhat longer *pipe* than usual. They have earned it by the speed they have

made already this morning. M. Tremblay and I are going on shore for awhile."

"Moi—pardonnez—dat is, I ask a tousand excuse, Miss Monique; but, remember you, dese is no time to run great risk. Miss Monique not want to go ashore to see de woods and de grass of de prairies; nor me, no more, to see dese canaille of sauvages. Recollect you, dear young demoiselle, dat it is not pritty, neider safe." And the poor gentleman's teeth fairly chattered. "Ven dese excellent people want to see us, dey shall come in our boat, n'est-ce pas?"

"Ah, yes, Monica, that will surely be the better way. Do not, pray, do not trust yourself ashore," pleaded Madeleine.

"Rest assured, I shall conduct you into no danger, monsieur," said Miss McGregor, without vouchsafing a reply to her sister's remonstrances. "You can take your seat in the open space on that rising ground yonder, in full view of the boats; and, if that is not sufficient, I will leave Moa-way to mount guard over you."

Her lip curled a little as she observed that Monsieur, far from feeling reassured, was still muttering,—

"For setting de wolf to take care of de sheep, I don't like it too much—me. I did promise your respectable fader to keep by de side of his daught', so I cannot say noting to de opposite of what Miss Monique command. Miss Monique mus' hab her own way, certainement—Hélas! Ce n'est pas amusant." And the poor man rose up with an air which he strove to make as little cowardly and dissatisfied as possible.

The boats had turned in at the foot of a little promontory, which, sloping and bare, extended upwards a few furlongs till it met a fringe of heavy forest trees.

Moa-way, with his canoe, had returned to this point.

Whether he had communicated with her sister, Madeleine could not tell. It was evident there was an understanding between them.

It was with a feeling of intense anxiety that she saw the latter, after stepping on shore, follow the Ottawa up the slope to its farthest verge; and this feeling grew into absolute terror when she observed that the Indian seated himself beside M. Tremblay upon the grass, while Monica, after apparently a few words of conference with the former, disappeared within the recesses of the forest.

CHAPTER L.

Miss McGregor had not to walk far. The person she had come to meet was awaiting her in a little glade or clearing made by one of those whirling tempests which occasionally leave traces of their ravages in our Western woods.

He was seated on the ground beside a fallen tree, his gun leaning across his knees, with his hand ready to clutch it. He was evidently on the alert.

He rose up, at the approach of footsteps, with a spring so light and agile that it hardly seemed the movement of a man past the prime of life. He was large and muscular in frame, with a lowering expression which was greatly increased by the effect of a mass of coarse hair drooping, contrary to the custom of his people, low over his brow, and by the black paint with which his face was smeared in token of either fasting or bereavement.

Monica could hardly repress a shudder of repulsion; yet she walked bravely on.

"Tshah-nee-kah?" she inquired, for it was long since they had met.

"Mau-nee-kah! Hee-noo-kar-ray-kay-noo!"* was his quiet salutation, but without offering his hand—an omission from which Monica drew no favorable augury.

In obedience to a gesture from the chief, she seated herself upon the fallen tree, at a little distance from him. Tshah-nee-kah resumed his seat upon his blanket, ungirded his pipe, with which he had abstained from solacing himself while on the *qui-vive*, and, lighting it from his tinder-box, smoked in silence. He was evidently resolved to wait until the one who had sought the conference should commence it.

Miss McGregor did not keep him long in expectation. "Your son-in-law is in the hands of his enemies," she began.

"Yes—he has thrown away his life," was the stolid reply.

"He has *offered* his life to save his people from destruction at the hand of the Big Knives," was the emphatic correction.

The chief made a derisive gesture. "What would the Big Knives have done? They could not have entered our country; Four-Legs held the key!"

"No—for Osh-kosh was beyond him, and the Menomonees are now the sworn allies of the Big Knives."

"Osh-kosh is a wise man. He would let his young men travel on the war-path with the Big Knives and eat their rations, but when it came to be a question of fighting he would bid them sit still in their lodges. Wau-nig-sootsh-kah was a fool. He ought to have known that every boat

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* "Traveller, welcome!" The latter word corresponds to our "How do you do?" yet it is not an inquiry after the health. A salutation of any kind is seldom used at meeting in the presence of strangers.

of the Big Knives could have been swamped before they reached Mee-nay-zhah—also that Hee-zharn-wau-zhee-kah* was ready to fall upon them if they attempted to pass him by land, and that, further, there were braves to meet them at the Ma-zhee-gaw-gaw and pick them off like marmots in a freshet."

"It may have been a mistake in Wau-nig-sootsh-kah to surrender himself, but it is done now; it cannot be undone. The only thing is to try and rescue him. We who are his friends must save him from his fate."

The savage regarded her from under his mass of black hair with a glance that was anything but reassuring.

She saw that he was not her friend. Why should he be? Had not the Red Bird's love for her rendered his beloved daughter Way-noo-nah unhappy? Her heart sank within her as she thought, "What if, in revenge upon us both, he leaves Wau-nig-sootsh-kah to perish?"

She did not quail, however, in outward seeming. She went on with apparent composure to lay before the chief the plan she had formed for the Red Bird's rescue, and her reasons for believing that if undertaken it would be successful. Of Wee-kau she did not remember to hint so much as a syllable.

Tshah-nee-kah listened to the whole detail without aiding by remark or suggestion; he continued to smoke in a silence that, to say the least, looked unsympathizing.

When she ceased, he removed the pipe slowly from his mouth, and, after a moment, he said,—

"At what hour must the game be played?"

"About the hour of our evening encampment—in the early dusk—this evening, if possible."

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* Wild Cat, the chief of Garlic Island.

"This evening the troops from below will encamp with you—they will be at Ee-nee-hoa-no-nik!"*

Miss McGregor started. "Is that so? Are you certain of it?"

"It is true. My young men saw the boats at the Sauk Prairie."

Miss McGregor reflected a few moments.

"Even if so," she said, "I cannot see that our scheme need be relinquished. The guards of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah can be tempted to relax their vigilance; and, once having evaded them and reached the water, our friend can as well escape from a hundred pursuers as from ten."

Tshah-nee-kah fixed upon her a penetrating look.

"And who will persuade Wau-nig-sootsh-kah to evade his guards and take to the water?" he asked. "Has he given his life to save his people from the Big Knives,"—there was a savage irony in the tones of the old chief as he quoted her words,—"and will he, before two suns have set, repent his sacrifice, and steal away like a badger from a trap?"

Monica did not venture to look up. She felt the full force of the old man's rebuke. Finding she did not speak, he went on:—"Who would counsel Wau-nig-sootsh-kah to such a course? I am *a man.* Let Way-noo-nah think of her husband as a warrior—*a brave!*"

The cruel Tshah-nee-kah gloated over the pang which he saw that his words inflicted on his daughter's rival.

Miss McGregor, however, though humiliated, did not altogether yield the point. After a pause of a few minutes, she said, calmly, "Then, if there is no hope in the scheme I proposed, another must be chosen. Wau-nig-sootsh-kah must be saved. You, Ee-aun-chee-wee-rah,† must devise

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* Petit Rocher (Little Rock), on the Wisconsin.

† Father—a term of respect rather than of endearment.

some means of disappointing our bloodthirsty enemies. Is there no stratagem you can suggest?"

Tshah-nee-kah pondered before replying. He was himself too crafty to be moved by the cajoling accents of his companion; he was meditating plans of his own and for purposes of his own.

"What would be done by the Big Knives, those who have our brethren in custody," he asked, "if they were told that I and my band had seized upon *you* and were about putting you to a slow and torturing death?"

Monica turned pale, and shivered in spite of herself. She quickly recovered, however, as she saw that there was more of cunning than of cruelty in the glance with which the old man regarded her. With the quick comprehension of her people, she seized his meaning, and replied,—

"They would send you a warning that the lives of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah and Wee-kau should answer for mine; that harm happening to me would be a signal for *their* execution, without trial and without delay."

"Good! and what the white man can do the red man can do."

"Even so," said Miss McGregor. "The question would be where to look for a hostage or hostages. I, being one of yourselves, would be of no use should I remain an apparent captive. The whites would not be beguiled into any scheme of exchanging their prisoners for one who, they would clearly understand, could be in no possible danger."

"No, you are not the person," said the chief, "nor is this the time. We must wait till the solders who are abroad in the country have returned to their posts,—till Day-kau-ray, who has been held under arrest at the Prairie, has returned to his home,—till suspicion is lulled to sleep.

Then we must look for some member of a prominent family, some person whose capture would be a matter of such consequence that our Great Father, as they teach us to call him, will bid high to purchase him out of our hands. Wau-nig-sootsh-kah must be patient: ere many months he may be ransomed."

"He *must* be ransomed," said Miss McGregor, emphatically. "He must not be made a victim of his own heroism. He shall not be punished for doing what he has been taught to consider right; for avenging the wanton slaughter of his relatives on the Upper Mississippi. I cannot give myself as a hostage; it would be of no avail. But if I had——" She stopped short.

Tshah-nee-kah waited a moment. "If you had a relative not of our blood, you would give him! Is that what you would say?"

Monica did not answer. Thoughts of which she was ashamed, which for a moment she struggled against, were flying through her brain. The chief read what was passing more clearly than she imagined, but he did not hasten to help her; he left her for some minutes silent, thoughtful, as she sat turning round her fingers a spray of a "gadding vine" that trailed along the log on which she was seated.

At length Tshah-nee-kah spoke, as if giving the result of careful deliberation:—

"Your father is a man of consequence. The Government would offer largely for *his* release, if a party of our young men should be so fortunate as to capture him some day."

"My father? Oh, no, no! not my father!" said Miss McGregor, with emphasis; "he must be sacred. The shade of my mother would visit me if I suspected danger menacing him and failed to put him on his guard. No,

not my father." Her voice sank as she repeated again, "Not *my father!*"

"You have no other relative?" said Tshah-nee-kah, inquiringly, as if he were ignorant of the particulars of her domestic life and history.

"I have a sister—my father's daughter," she replied, in a low tone, which she strove to make indifferent.

"Does your father love her well enough to attempt the release of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah for her sake?"

"She is dear to him beyond all else on the face of the earth," replied Miss McGregor, bitterly. "Everything, everybody, would be but as dust in the balance if weighed against her safety and happiness."

"Then," said Tshah-nee-kah, with quiet decision, "she is the key with which we must open the door of the Red Bird's prison. At the right moment, by-and-by,—you shall be warned when the time approaches. Things must get back to their former state of quietness. The past must be in some measure forgotten; our people must fall into their old habits of going to Tee-pee-sau-kee* to trade. When the proper hour is near at hand, you will hear from me again."

Tshah-nee-kah rose from his seat. Miss McGregor did the same. She felt humbled even under the eye of one so cruel and treacherous as the savage to whose suggestions she had lent such a willing ear. Yet she did not the less, in her heart of hearts, congratulate herself that the suggestion had been made; neither did she for a moment falter in her resolution of aiding and abetting whatever scheme should be proposed that would secure the accomplishment of the object she had at heart.

As the old chief and his companion walked a little way

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* Prairie du Chien—literally, *Sauk lodges.*

forward on the path by which the latter had come, another figure glided stealthily away in the shelter of the fallen logs, and, passing noiselessly in the rear of some clumps of shrubs and bushes, by a little circuit had gained the open ground, and was stretched at lazy length beside the dozing Monsieur Tremblay, when Miss McGregor drew near and announced her readiness to return to her party in the boat.

CHAPTER LI.

MONICA found, on observing the height which the sun had gained in the heavens, that the half-hour she had bespoken for *a pipe* for the boatmen had lengthened itself into at least two hours. The bourgeois had, doubtless, been impatient; but that was a matter of small moment. She only wished she could have prolonged the sojourn of their party for a still more extended season, to insure their being overtaken by the other boats. Now that her schemes for his release were thoroughly matured, she was anxious to obtain, if possible, an interview with the Red Bird, and cheer him with a detail of the flattering prospect.

It cost her something of an effort to meet her sister with an unembarrassed countenance. The consciousness of all that she had been plotting made her uncomfortable in spite of herself; and when Madeleine sprang to meet her with demonstrations of joy at her safe return, and would have clasped her in a tender embrace, Monica found it difficult to receive her caresses coldly and without a pretence of returning them.

She strove to stifle her compunctious feelings by arguments to her conscience, somewhat to this effect:—

"After all, what will it be? A few days, or, at most, a few weeks, at their village near the Four Lakes! Why should any one shrink from that? Have not the happiest, the most blissful days of my life been passed in that beautiful spot? She will meet with nothing but kindness; old Wee-rah-kah will pet her and make much of her. A visit there may have the effect of banishing from her mind the prejudices that now make her so uncomfortable. And she is so tender-hearted that when she finds her capture has been the means of saving the Red Bird's life, she will rejoice rather than complain that she has borne her part in the good work."

She strove to dismiss the subject from her mind, while she cast about for some excuse for detaining the little fleet still longer on its voyage.

There was enough of the aboriginal in her nature to make her first impulse that of devising some stratagem for accomplishing this object; but a moment's reflection convinced her that the plain truth would probably serve her purpose best.

The gracious phrases of apology with which she began explaining her protracted absence were, as she at once perceived, quite superfluous. The bourgeois had not the air of one whose time had hung heavy upon his hands, and, truth to tell, Madeleine was entirely unaware of the length of her sister's absence. She would probably have been excessively worried had she observed the stealthy manner in which the Ottawa had quitted his recumbent position beside the sleeping Monsieur, and she would have commented upon it to the bourgeois; but it so happened that she had not remembered, after the first ten minutes, to look in that direction, or, indeed, towards any other point, except alternately from the embroidery in her hand to the countenance of the companion who sat before her, now

reading aloud, now stopping to talk upon other subjects, in the absorbing interest of which all note of time was lost.

"I have seen a chief of the Winnebagoes," Miss McGregor began, with an air of frankness, "a stranger to you, I think, Madeleine, and he tells me that his young men have come in with a report that the troops from St. Louis are only about thirty miles below us on the river. It was for that reason, among others, that I did not hurry myself to return and give order to set forward. I thought you would deem it advisable, Mr. Logan, to wait still a little while longer here, until we are joined by our military friends. Does not that seem to you preferable to encamping in the immediate vicinity of strangers?"

The bourgeois could not say that it would; to tell the truth, these military friends were woefully in his way. But, as this was a fact he could not advance in objection to Miss McGregor's suggestion, he acquiesced with a good grace, remembering that he had already had two hours of unlooked-for happiness, and that to-morrow they should probably be rid of all travelling companions save the members of their own party.

The only stipulation which accompanied his assent to the proposed delay was, that they should proceed for yet a couple of *pipes* farther, to a beautiful encamping-ground, where, according to old Michaud, they would find clear spring-water, fine timber, and safety from "cette canaille de Puans."

The voyageurs, after reaching and taking possession of the romantic spot, whose praises Michaud had not vaunted too loudly, had hardly begun to "boil their kettle" when, with shout and song, the little fleet of Colonel Bentley came sweeping down the rapid course of the Wisconsin.

It was amusing to observe how, in the lugubrious melody of "Springfield Mountain," or the more animated strains

of "Handsome Harry," the Yankee soldiers had learned to emulate the style of the Canadian boatmen, though with noble independence bidding defiance to the arbitrary restraints that would have bound them to take their cue from one particular leader.

Miss McGregor's heart bounded with joy as the boats approached the spot on which her party were already encamped and she perceived that it was the intention of the officers to pitch their tents in neighborly proximity.

She should see the Red Bird! She could whisper to him words of hope! She would bid him be of good courage, and she would hint of the means by which she and his father-in-law would work for his liberation.

Captain Lytle was the one on whose friendship she must mainly rely. She chased away his image as he stood before her in the dreams of the previous night, hindering her efforts for the safety of the young chief, instead of lending a helping hand. No, she would not be superstitious—she would not believe in omens—her Church forbade it. She would rely upon her power to charm her admirer. He would not be able to resist her blandishments—her coquetry—if to that weapon she should be forced to resort. He would have no chance, she remembered, to upbraid her afterwards with her insincerity, for were not the two parties to separate on the following day? Could she not, indeed, at any moment give the word for her own people to push on, and, if need were, run away outright from reproaches and disagreeable recriminations?

Such were the thoughts which chased each other as she rose up, with smiling grace, to receive the bevy of gentlemen, who, having left their boats at a reasonable distance above the spot chosen by Michaud for his encampment, came with prompt courtesy to pay their respects to the young ladies.

Monica was dazzling in her beauty this evening. The sad and wan expression of the last few days had vanished. Hope, which she called *certainty*, of the rescue of her hero, sent the blood coursing through her veins and gave brilliancy to her eye and a bloom to her cheek.

Captain Lytle, as he gazed, and as he listened to the tones of her gentle, melodious voice, no longer hesitated what he should do.

"It's all a humbug," he said to himself. "She cares no more for that cursed red-skin than she does for one of her boatmen. On the contrary, it is pretty evident that she is not altogether indifferent about somebody else; without vanity, it is not easy to mistake that. I wonder if Stafford observed that enchanting smile as she offered me her hand? I have a slight curiosity to hear what he will say to-morrow morning when I go to ask his congratulations."

The captain, with pleased dignity, lingered near his lady-love, ever at hand with courteous attentions, yet careful not to show himself too demonstrative and provoke comment or raillery from his companions.

The voyageurs had cut down a huge tree and built their fire, the warmth of which was not disagreeable at this late hour of a September day. The ladies voted for taking their meal in the open air, rather than within the shelter of the tent. "It would be such a pity," Madeleine said, "to lose the gorgeous sunset, and the evening song of the birds," which, unscared by the proximity of their unwonted visitors, were now carolling forth their farewell to the departing day. Miss McGregor was not unmindful of the duties of hospitality.

"Shall we have the pleasure of your company at our mess, gentlemen?" she said. "I can offer you a cup of coffee such as only a Frenchman can make, and a ham of

venison à-la-mode, of Madame Lapierre's preparing. She has replenished our mess-basket in a style fit for the Grand Seignior."

The officers excused themselves. They had already accepted an invitation from Mrs. Smart, who would be mortified if they should disappoint her.

"Of which, I fancy, she is somewhat afraid," said Lieutenant Gaylord; "for, see, here she comes, like a bashawess of three tails, with Mrs. Hale and her two inevitable live-olive-branches behind her."

The errand of Mrs. Smart was to entreat that the young ladies would join the circle she was already preparing to entertain. "It is so much better," she declared, "for old friends and fellow-travellers to keep together as much as they can! I've got my Corbin a cooking us a first-rate supper. Not but what," with a glance at the mat, "you've got everything wonderfully nice yourselves; but still I'll do my best by you."

"Which ought to satisfy an epicure,—of that there can be no doubt," said Miss McGregor, politely; "and, if you will allow our people to transfer some of Madame Lapierre's contributions to your table, my sister and I will be most happy to add ourselves to your company."

Madeleine could not quite echo the civility, yet as little could she interpose an objection.

"And Moh-shoo Tremblay and Mr. Logan, of course," added Mrs. Smart, an invitation which was joyously accepted by Monsieur, but declined by the bourgeois on the plea of his presence being required near the sphere of his duties; and almost immediately the party set off, Captain Lytle walking by the side of Miss McGregor, who, in the gayest spirits, chatted merrily for his entertainment, to the great wonder of her sister, who could not comprehend the change that a few hours seemed to have wrought.

CHAPTER LII.

THE Commissioner had been in a state of enviable contentment throughout the preceding forty-eight hours. What with taking notes, asking questions, and speculating or theorizing in regard to all that met his eye or ear, he had laid up such a fund for the future benefit of the historical and ethnological world that it had taken him all the waking hours of his voyage down the Wisconsin to reduce it to order, and prepare it to be packed away in a certain cylindrical tin case, fitted to preserve a deposit so precious.

Having completed the last page, and carefully secured the whole from the dangers and vicissitudes incident to a position in the centre of a substantial leather valise, Colonel Babbitt was now ready to make himself as agreeable as he dared, to the elder of the two sisters. He had an object in view, a favor to ask; yet he hardly knew how to approach the subject, for he still, to tell the truth, felt a good deal afraid of the young lady.

He settled and resettled his wig (for the Commissioner did not own, except by purchase, the chestnut curls which a recipe of his own made ambrosial), and he conned over in his mind all the most innocent phrases in which he could clothe his application; then he ventured, though still with some trepidation, to come forward.

Never had Monica dreamed of finding the Commissioner so charming, of feeling herself moved by such an impulse to hug him to her heart, as while listening to his petition:—

"You will excuse me, my dear young lady; I would

not for the world take a liberty, or wound your feelings. I entreat you to pardon me if there is the slightest impropriety in what I am about to ask. But to explain: Colonel Bentley has kindly given me leave to hold a little conversation, to ask a few questions, that is, of this young Winnebago chief whom they have now in custody. I assure you, the farthest thing from my thoughts would be to say an unkind or reproachful word. It is simply to gain information that I would apply to him. Now, as you are doubtless aware, there is a difficulty in the way of our communicating, he not understanding a word of my language, nor I of his. If you would do me the great, the inestimable favor to ask him a few questions as I should prompt, and to tell me what he says in reply——"

To the Commissioner's surprise, Miss McGregor interrupted him with the most cordial cheerfulness:—

"I shall be happy to be your interpreter, sir, if Colonel Bentley gives me leave. The Red Bird, as you are probably aware, is a relative of mine, and I shall feel grateful to any one who will be the means of allowing him to hear even a few sentences of his native tongue."

The glance she cast towards Captain Lytle showed him unmistakably the surest road to her favor; and, dreading no longer any untoward results from the interview which the Commissioner was proposing, he did not hesitate to whisper her the assurance,—

"I will take care that the Commissioner has every facility for a conference with the young chief. After your interview is over," he added, significantly, "I trust you will not refuse me the pleasure of escorting you on your return to your own quarters."

Miss McGregor had so much womanly feeling that she would have been glad to refuse. She understood what the request foreboded, and she was not so perverted by vain

and worldly influences as to be sensible of a triumph in the power of causing disappointment to another. True, she well understood that the pain her answer would cause Captain Lytle would not be a heart-breaking one; yet she was aware that if a man has been led by hopes of success to the point of asking a woman to marry him, it is a bitter mortification, even if no tender sentiment be wounded, to find that he has miscalculated his chances. How she now wished that she had been less gracious to her admirer,—that she had not led him on to this point! It had been, as it proved, hypocrisy thrown away, for Captain Lytle, after all, had not been instrumental in procuring her this coming interview with the Red Bird. It was hypocrisy, unfortunately, of which she must probably pay a heavy penalty; for Captain Lytle was not the man to take tamely and quietly the destruction of hopes which she had encouraged. She would have to listen to a good deal that was unpleasant,—of that there could be no doubt,—unless she could contrive to "stave off" the explanation till the following day, and then quietly slip away from it.

The spot on which the officers had pitched their tents was hardly less picturesque than that selected by old Michaud for his young mistresses. A charming glade of open ground, covered with a profusion of flowers of the early autumn,—long spikes of blue lupin, far more luxuriant than are to be found in cultivated Eastern gardens, tufts of yellow wall-flower in masses like the rising harvest-moon, scarlet adonis in whole parterres, autumn pinks, and the splendid lobelia cardinalis, fringed gentian, and variegated heart's-ease in unspeakable profusion,—the little esplanade which they embellished hemmed in by magnificent forest trees, upon which the last rose-colored rays of the departing sun were resting.

When the cheerful meal was finished, the Commissioner

came to claim the promise of Miss McGregor to accompany him to his interview with Wau-nig-sootsh kah.

The colonel had considerately assigned a small tent for the use of the prisoners, but he did not require them to confine themselves to it. The freedom of a moderate space around it was granted them, while a double row of sentinels in front and rear indicated the slender reliance placed by the Big Knives on the parole of their prisoners.

The Red Bird had laid aside all his bravery of apparel. Some one—it might have been a tender and thoughtful woman—had furnished him from the trading-house with a neat chintz shirt, a pair of leggings of blue cloth, and a blanket of the color which accorded with the name he bore. He was sitting in front of his tent, smoking, gazing placidly at the sky in an attitude of profound meditation. A smile lighted his countenance as he saw who was approaching; but, although he sprang to his feet, he did not advance as he said, gently,—

"Española! Tshah-ko-zshah?" (What is it?)

"Good news; sunshine is on the path before us," she replied, in the same calm tone.

The Commissioner interrupted promptly:—

"Now, if you would be so good as to ask him these few questions," he said, drawing a folded paper from his pocket, "and then translate to me his answers, you will oblige me infinitely."

He produced a small memorandum-book, and prepared himself to write as Miss McGregor should dictate. Wee-kau sat a little way apart, listening, but taking no share in the conversation.

"Question first," began the Commissioner. "Where did the Winnebago tribe come from? What is their tradition upon the subject?"

Miss McGregor's translation was to this effect:—

"I saw Tshah-nee-kah this morning, at a place just below the Barribault. He came in compliance with a message I sent him by Moa-way."

"Tshah-nee-kah could bring no message that it would be pleasant for me to hear," replied the Red Bird.

"He says," explained Miss McGregor to the Commissioner, "that the traditions of his people are, that they came originally from the Northwest."

"Is it possible?" cried the Commissioner, hastening to write down the answer. "That is very interesting! It just supports my theory that the Indians are a remnant of the lost tribes of Israel. Ask him, if you please, my second question. Are there any traces of their having been originally divided into tribes? and what is said about it?"

"I proposed to Tshah-nee-kah," continued Miss McGregor, "to try some stratagem by which your captors could be thrown off their guard, in order to give you and Wee-kau a chance to escape."

Wau-nig-sootsh-kah could not repress a gesture of scorn.

"Was it Española who counselled that?" he asked.

"He seems not to like the question. I cannot see what there is in it to offend," said the Commissioner.

"Put aside your paper, sir, if you please," said Miss McGregor, with ready wit; "it is formidable to one unaccustomed to be catechised in this manner." Then, hastily explaining to the Red Bird the stratagem she was practicing, she waited for a few words of comment before furnishing the Commissioner her next item of information.

"He says that there is a tradition among them, that their people were originally divided into twelve tribes, but

that in some manner, of which no trace is preserved, two of the tribes were lost."*

"Wonderful! most wonderful! How exactly it tallies with my theory! Won't you ask him, my dear, how he accounts for it that the aborigines speak so many different languages, all of which are, for the most part, so unlike the Hebrew?"

"We have formed a plan to which you cannot object, and by which you can be liberated, my friend," she went on to say. "Your father-in-law will charge himself with its execution. He will send emissaries, by-and-by, to steal some prominent person or persons at Tee-pee-sau-kee, and he will hold them as hostages till government shall order your discharge from custody in exchange."

"And does Tshah-nee-kah think it will be easy to accomplish such a scheme? After what has passed at Tee-pee-sau-kee, will not everybody use tenfold vigilance and watchfulness against our people? Is it certain that the Ho-tshung-rahs will even be permitted to enter the place to trade, as heretofore?"

"He says," said Miss McGregor, pondering, "that he has always been a hunter and a warrior, and that he has never concerned himself with questions about language. That he thinks his people talk as the Great Spirit taught them to, and that they have never heard how people talked in the olden time."

"That is very sensible, to say the least. I think your friend is a very smart Indian. His answers are wonderfully categorical. I wish you would tell him there used to be among the ancient Jews a character very much like himself,—Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord,—who

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* The particulars here given are actually among the traditions of the Winnebagoes or Ho-tshung-rahs.

also knew but little about books. I wonder if they have any tradition about him? Will you oblige me by asking?"

"You may be certain, my friend, that nothing will be left untried for your deliverance," said Miss McGregor, earnestly; "and we shall succeed—certainly we shall succeed. Why will you not cheer up, and view the matter in a hopeful light? We have laid our plans so cunningly that they cannot fail of accomplishment."

Monica did not say to the Red Bird that the hostage had been already fixed upon by the savage old chief and herself. She had a conviction that the young hero would despise her for her want of natural affection—this being a vice almost unknown among the untutored heathen.

"Will you not let me see you smile in the prospect of the future?" she continued. "Will you not look forward with hope?"

"No, Española, I cannot look forward with hope such as your words would inspire. The path before me is not in this world. Last night, as I slept, my father stood over me. He had come from the other land. The moon, which the Great Spirit made to give light to the dead, shone pale about him. He bade me go to a high hill from which I could overlook our beautiful country. 'You will say good-by,' said he, 'and come to me! The day is approaching when our people will take their leave of this their home, and go weeping and mourning to a land of strangers. When you have said farewell, you will see our lakes and prairies no more, but you will join me, and together we will hunt and smoke in that better land where no white man can enter.' Such were his words,—then he vanished like a thin mist, and I saw him no more; but I know that he is waiting for me, and that ere long I shall go to him."

"What is all that he is saying? It seems a very long explanation," said the Commissioner, a little impatiently.

"He says he is tired of answering questions such as he is not well able to understand," replied Miss McGregor. "I will try once more, and if he is still indisposed to be communicative, you will have, I fear, to accept such answers as I can myself give you." Then, addressing the Red Bird, "Do not give way, I entreat you, to such gloomy fancies."

"They are not gloomy, Española. Death to me is better than life."

"Ah! you make me unhappy—my heart is breaking, while I am forced to wear a smiling face. Will you not let me work in hope for your deliverance? Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, *Ar-nee-noa,** it rests with yourself whether your future is life and happiness, or the dark and silent grave."

"For your sake I will look forward in hope," said the young chief; "but go from me now. I cannot bear the eyes of that man fixed upon me and scanning me as if I were a cougar caught in a pitfall. Tell him I will speak no more—tell him I wish to smoke in silence. It may be that I shall see you after we get to Tee-pee-sau-kee. Your priest will come to convert me, and will perhaps call you to his aid—this is the way of them. Farewell." And again he turned his gaze to the western sky.

Miss McGregor explained to the Commissioner what she termed the reluctance of the prisoner to answer any further questions, and together they left the neighborhood of the little tent—the young lady continuing, though with an unwilling mind, to answer to the best of her ability the questions propounded by the Commissioner upon what he termed the "history and ethnology" of the Ho-tshung-rahs.

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* My own.

As she passed the miserable and squalid Wee-kau, he looked up at her with an imploring air.

"P'haa-zha-nee-nah tshoonsh-koo-nee-noh,"* he said.

Miss McGregor shook her head.

"P'haa-zha-nee-nah woank-hah p'hee-nee-noh,"† she said, and the face of the savage grew more dark and scowling at her answer.

"Bless my heart! what a strange, guttural language!" said the Commissioner. "Was he threatening you, or any of us? Dear me! who would have thought that he was merely bidding you good-evening?" said the Commissioner, meditatively.

CHAPTER LIII.

CAPTAIN LYTLE had been waiting with impatience for the termination of the task Miss McGregor had undertaken. He wished the Commissioner in his Eastern home, if not in some far less cool and comfortable place; and he could not refrain from joining the young lady and her attendant before they quite reached the scene of the evening's repast.

Madeleine and M. Tremblay had already taken their leave, so there was no excuse for Miss McGregor to linger. Much as she shrank from the explanation which she knew was awaiting her, there seemed nothing but to have it over and done with; so, having paid her parting compliments to Mrs. Smart and the rest of the company, she

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* "I have got no whiskey." (The Indian form of begging.)

† Whiskey is not a good thing.

accepted the escort of Captain Lytle and set out on her way to their own encampment.

The captain had no uncomfortable misgivings as to the answer he was to receive. He had discoursed to himself somewhat in this fashion: "It is best to have the thing settled, so that we can plan for the future. As for marrying just at present, that is, of course, out of the question. I shall have to write to her father—though, as she is of age, that will be a mere form, and I can come out for her in the spring, when I shall be entitled to a furlough. What a confounded plague it is, people's living so far out of the world! I wonder how my mother and Eliza will take it! They have a good many prejudices, of one kind and another; but I think Monica will have shrewdness enough not to run counter to their little peculiarities. I shall have to keep the Randolphs and Pocahontas before their Virginian eyes," and so forth, and so forth.

Thus the captain prepared himself for the interview.

Two of the younger officers were standing at no great distance, engaged in amicable chat, as the couple set forth on their walk. The visage of Hamilton lengthened with curiosity, that of Gaylord shortened with humor, as they gazed upon the retreating figures.

"What's up now?" said the former. "That looks a little particular."

"The gentleman is going to catch something more than he has bargained for;—that is all," remarked the latter.

"You don't think she means to say *no*?"

"I reckon," was the sententious reply.

"Why, I'm sure she has been sweet enough towards him these two days."

"That doesn't mean,' Yes, I thank you.' It only means, 'Do the handsome thing by my Winnebago sweetheart.'"

"Well, from what I know of Lytle, I predict that if

Miss McGregor does not say, 'Yes, I thank you,' the thing that will be done towards Mr. Red Bird will be anything but handsome."

"Very likely," said Gaylord. "It will be easy enough to tell by-and-by what she has said. Lytle has been pluming himself like a peacock of late—it will be hard for him to help showing it if he happens unfortunately to be turned into a wet duck."

Meanwhile the couple under discussion walked on. They were hardly out of ear-shot when Captain Lytle began,—

"You cannot, I think, be unaware of my motive in petitioning you to accept my escort this evening?" His tone was soft, but it was not timid. "I have not attempted to disguise my feelings of admiration, my——"

Miss McGregor cut him short. It was better, she thought, that they should come to a right understanding at once.

"No, Captain Lytle, I will not pretend to deny that I have perceived those feelings; you have characterized them rightly; they have been those of admiration,—nothing more. You have struggled perseveringly against them. Believe me, it is a matter of sincere regret to me that you have not done so more successfully."

There was a fierceness in the glance of Captain Lytle, yet he strove to repress any harshness in his tone, as he exclaimed, "You surely cannot intend to insult a man who offers you his hand, his whole life, by calling his affection in question? I do not think I have deserved this. Can you imagine that I would address you as I do, upon the mere idle preference that beauty and fascinating manners can win? Perhaps," he said, in a milder accent, "I chose my words badly. Let us say nothing of admiration. We have been too long and too constantly in each other's

society for you to really doubt the nature of my sentiments. You say that you have perceived them, such as they are; and have you not—do not mistake me again; I would not say anything presumptuous—but have you not given me reason to believe that my devotion was not disagreeable to you?"

Monica could not deny the impeachment. Captain Lytle had put his case in its best form, and he had really shown more sensibility than she gave him credit for possessing. His dismissal was a more difficult task than she had foreseen. She was embarrassed for a reply. She had, in fact, nothing to say but that "she couldn't and she wouldn't." She had no resource but to stick to her first text.

"I think, and you must not be angry with me if I say it, that it is only within the last two days that you have cared so much, that you have been so much in earnest in this matter. Before that time——" She stopped. Was she not admitting that she had watched him, and taken note of his feelings and intentions?

"Well," he said, seizing upon the hint, "before that time, what? Cannot Miss McGregor understand that a man may feel diffident of exposing himself to rejection on the ground of too great precipitancy? What right had I to annoy you until I had some faint hope that I was not altogether indifferent to you? You were peculiarly situated—on a journey, without father or brother. It would perhaps have been my duty to have delayed still longer, but I *could* not part with you without knowing my fate—therefore I have ventured to speak."

As is often the case, by dint of pleading, Captain Lytle had worked himself up to quite a respectable pitch of tenderness, which made it the more difficult for Monica to say, as she did with some compunction,—

"I am sorry if my manner deceived you. I hope you will not suffer yourself to feel greatly disappointed. It would be no kindness to accept your addresses when I cannot return the affection you"—she was going to say *profess*—"which you offer me."

There was a momentary hesitation, which he misinterpreted.

"And why can you not return it—in time? for I will not hurry your decision. It is impossible that there can be any sentiment of dislike towards me; your manner has shown the contrary too plainly. I must say that much, in justice to myself. I will not despair unless assured that there is some happier man—yet that I will not believe. You would not in that case have suffered me to delude myself with hopes which you must have been aware of. You would not—you *could* not—have treated me thus. Say that I may hope—it is all that I ask."

"No, I must not say that," replied Miss McGregor. "I must leave no room for further misunderstanding. I cannot marry you, Captain Lytle; but, if it will be any comfort or satisfaction to you, I can assure you solemnly that I shall never marry another. I do not ask you now to forgive the pain I may have caused you. I know that you will do so by-and-by—perhaps you will even rejoice that my answer to you was what it is."

She held out her hand to him, for they had arrived at a spot where it seemed most appropriate to separate. Captain Lytle did not take it.

"We part friends, I hope?" she said.

The captain lifted his shako, bowed, and turned away without a word. Rage and mortification were in his heart. He had been trifled with, jilted, and by one whom, in his heart, he had thought it a condescension to address. And the worst of it was that, in his triumph, he had made

it abundantly evident to his military comrades that he felt himself thoroughly established in the good graces of the beautiful métive.

"Was it a premeditated plan of hers," he asked himself, "to punish me for not falling at her feet and offering to run my neck into the noose as precipitately as Dalton did? Very likely. The whole race is as treacherous as—— Or was it"—and the blood leaped fiercer in his veins—"was it in order to find a pretext for holding converse with that bloodthirsty young Puan yonder that she led me on to make a fool of myself?" The captain ground his teeth in rage. "A fool? Yes, I was, a double-distilled fool, to trust one of that blood. Was she not own cousin to an assassin? And I could forget that! I will remember it hereafter!"

CHAPTER LIV.

Miss McGregor returned to the camp of her own party in an uncomfortable frame of mind.

The gloomy forebodings of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah weighed upon her spirits, even in spite of the precepts of her Church which forbade superstition, and in defiance of her own arguments with which she had sought to encourage him.

The thoughts, too, of her treatment of Captain Lytle—the mortification, to call it by no severer name, that she had caused him—were anything but enlivening. It was in vain that she said to herself, "I have but served him as he was ready at one time to serve me." Her conscience told her that her premeditated deceit was far more heinous than her admirer's vacillation of purpose.

She was in that state of feeling that she was ready to find a grief in whatever presented itself.

As she passed along on her way to the "ladies' boat," she observed Michaud with a quarter of venison before him on the grass, from which he was instructing his adjutant, a young *mangeur de lard*, to cut some steaks properly for the next morning's breakfast.

"Ah! du chevreuil! Où l'avez-vous trouvé, Michaud?"* she asked.

"Je compte b'an que c'est le Courte-Oreille, le Loup, qui l'a apporté,"† was the response.

"Le Loup? You must be mistaken. We parted with him at noon, up the river. How could he have come here without my knowledge? And where is he now?"

"Pas capab' vous dire,"‡ said the old Frenchman, with a shrug of the shoulders. He had seen the Ottawa with his own eyes, but he would not contradict his demoiselle when she averred that he must be mistaken.

"Have you seen anything of Moaway?" said Miss McGregor, addressing her next question to her sister.

"Yes, I saw him for a few minutes."

"What brought him here? What did he want, that he should come and go in that mysterious manner?"

"I did not ask him what he wanted. He answered the questions I did ask."

"Questions about what?"

There was a little sharpness in Miss McGregor's tone, notwithstanding that she had, since her interview with Tshah-nee-kah, decided that a condescending and, if possible, an affectionate manner towards her sister would be the most politic.

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* Ah! venison? Where did you get it, Michaud?

† I think it was the Ottawa, the Wolf, who brought it.

‡ Can't tell you.

"I inquired of him what the Red Bird had done with the beautiful dress and ornaments that he wore yesterday."

Miss McGregor changed color. It was a question that, before all others, she longed to ask.

"Well, what did he say?"

"That when some one of his own people placed in his tent a suit of the ordinary Indian costume, the Red Bird laid aside his beautiful garments, folded them carefully into a package, and sent them by a messenger to his village at the Four Lakes, to his wife, Way-noo-nah."

The gloom deepened on Monica's countenance. Madeleine observed it with consternation. She could understand that an early attachment might bring upon her sister a tremendous shock at the unexpected transactions of yesterday; but she could not reconcile it to her sense of right that the mention of the Red Bird's wife should call up such an expression. She hoped that she had misconstrued it.

"I suppose he considered this present a final leave-taking," she pursued. "Moa-way said that if she were a Chippewa woman she would carry it in her arms, like an infant, a whole year, and never be separated from it—that is, in case the Red Bird were condemned and lost his life."

"Wau-nig-sootsh-kah is not condemned yet, and he may not, most likely *will* not, lose his life," said Monica, almost angrily; and she turned from her sister to seek information from another source.

"Mr. Logan, do you know anything about the Ottawa, Moa-way? He has been here, they tell me. You may recollect we parted with him at noon, where we gave the men so long a pipe."

"Yes. Michaud tells me he brought part of a deer as a present, and he gave him a pan of flour in return. I saw him, if I am not mistaken, talking awhile with your sister.

I will inquire among the men if he is still in the neighborhood."

Thus the bourgeois evaded a direct answer. He could not inform Miss McGregor what Moa-way's errand had actually been, nor would he have felt disposed to repeat to her the following conversation, which had taken place between the Ottawa and himself:—

"*Le Roux* will be content to see his little daughter again!" Moa-way had begun, in an indifferent tone.

Logan was not ignorant that Mr. McGregor passed among the Puans by the name of Nar-zee-kah, the yellow-haired, a sobriquet exaggerated by the métives into Le Roux.

"Yes, doubtless he will be very happy. They have been separated for three years," was the young man's reply.

"He had better have left her on the other side of the Great Lakes for yet another year," remarked the Ottawa.

"You mean on account of these Indian troubles?" asked Logan.

"Not of the troubles that are gone, but of those that are to come."

"Will the tribes band together, do you think, and make a general outbreak?"

"They are not such fools."

"What then? Will the Winnebagoes make a descent upon the Prairie with the hope of rescuing L'Oiseau Rouge? The garrison is strong, and is to be still further reinforced."

"They will attempt no such scheme. The chiefs of the nation would not listen to it."

"What, then, do you fear? Against what danger are you warning me?" For the young man saw plainly that it was not without design that his companion had given this turn to the conversation.

"A bird has been singing in my ears that there are some who do not love the little one too well."

"Good heavens! Some among the savages?"

The Ottawa shrugged his shoulders in a fashion that he had acquired along with his reading, religion, and other items of civilization while domesticated with Father Sylvan.

It did not enlighten the young man, who looked at him anxiously.

"If you know of any danger which threatens her," he said, "if you have any better foundation for the caution you give me than vague surmises, you ought surely to tell me, that I may with double care watch over and shield one whom I—whom we all——"

"You *will* watch over her, by night and by day," said Moa-way.

"But if I only had a hint of the quarter whence danger is to come! I shall not relax my vigilance during her waking hours. At night, it must be rather her sister. Shall I warn Miss McGregor?"

The Ottawa again gave his peculiar shrug.

"Does the Puan blood in her veins bind the two sisters the more strongly to each other?" he asked. "*Kah-ween.*"

"You surely cannot think it possible," said the young man, in alarm, "that Mau-nee-kah would lend herself to any scheme for her sister's hurt?"

Moa-way, though bent on securing a watchful protection for the younger sister, had no intention of betraying the elder. Without replying to the suggestion of the bourgeois, he simply reiterated his former injunction:—

"Watch over her as the dove watches over its young. There are birds of prey flying in the air. As long as L'Oiseau Rouge lies captive in the hands of the Big Knives, so long must you keep guard, and never sleep save with one eye open."

"Will they attempt her life?" asked the young man, hardly able from agitation to utter the question.

"They have had enough of blood," said Moa-way. "What they want now is to *save* life, not to take it."

It was in vain that the bourgeois plied him with questions. He sat and smoked, occasionally answering, in his vernacular, "Kah-ween kee-ken-don!" or, in the patois of the country, "Pas capab' vous dire," till Logan gave up in despair. After a short interval, the Ottawa gave him the information that the troops under General Atkinson were encamped at a very short distance below them,—so short, that the two commands would be sure to meet on the following morning.

The bourgeois at once dispatched a messenger with the news to Colonel Bentley, thus securing himself against any hindrance to the prosecution of his voyage at as early an hour as might suit him on the next day. He must hasten on his way; for he could not feel at ease until he should find himself with his precious charge safe out of the Ho-tshungrah country and under the guns of Fort Crawford.

CHAPTER LV.

Down the glassy stream, while "Aurora" was still in her "robe of cramasy" and "cape of flame," the *voyageurs* took their way on the following morning; and so well did they ply their oars, that, before they had begun to dream of their second pipe, the clarion voice of old Michaud was heard, "Arrache'! arrache'! on arrive, nos gens—whoop-là pour le Petit Rocher!"* and presently after,—

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* Pull away, men; we are nearly at the Little Rock!

"Le voilà! whoop! whoop! mais, sacré mon diable! comme il y a du monde là-bas!"*

Already had the vigilant eyes of the rest of the party descried the fleet of boats, the tents still unstruck, the smoke of the camp-fires rising straight in the cool morning air, and the groups of soldiers and militia, either moving or stationary, according to the behests of their officers.

The United States flag was flying from the mast of the most imposing among the barges of the squadron; while the tents still standing, late as was the hour, told unmistakably that the commander had preferred not to move until he had made sure of a comfortable breakfast.

As the Company's boats approached, their shouts of salutation were answered by a "whoop! whoop! whoop!" so loud and shrill that Madeleine instinctively sprang from her seat.

"Ah!" she cried, "I know that shout! Monica, that is our father's voice! And look, look! there—standing on the bank a little this side of the boats! It *is* papa! it surely *is* papa! Oh, do tell them to make haste!" She clasped her hands, her eyes filled with tears of emotion and delight.

"Yes, that is surely my father," said Miss McGregor, calmly, "and he is looking out for us."

In spite of her sister's remonstrances, Madeleine, aided by the bourgeois, mounted to a conspicuous position upon a bench between two of the rowers, whence she could wave her handkerchief in token of recognition and welcome.

The boats had soon approached so near as to be able to turn in towards the bank and allow the master to come on board, when the loving parent and child were once more clasped in each other's embrace.

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* There it is; but, the deuce! how many people there are there!

"And Monica, my daughter, how are you? I am glad to see you back again," her father said, as he took his elder daughter by the hand and kissed her cheek.

"I am quite well, I thank you, sir," was Monica's quiet reply, as she mentally contrasted the reception of her sister and herself, without remembering that Madeleine had been absent three years, and she but as many months.

"Ever the same—the one idolized, the other overlooked and wellnigh forgotten!" she said, bitterly, to herself.

Mr. McGregor was a stalwart, finely-made man, with a broad clear brow, piercing gray eyes, and hair which had been of a warm auburn tint, but was now softened by time into a rich brown, among the crisp curls of which threads of silver were already quite visible. His slightly aquiline nose and short upper lip, disclosing when he spoke, and more particularly when he smiled, teeth of great fairness and regularity, made his face a very pleasant one to look upon. There was much in its expression that was genial; though a furrow between his eyebrows spoke of habits of deep thought,—thought not always of a cheerful character.

Now, no feelings save those of happiness beamed from his eyes, and he received the young bourgeois, whom Monica hastened to present to him, with a degree of courtesy which surprised the latter, accustomed as she was to his rather distant manner towards those in his employ.

"You have brought my children safely home to me, sir," he said; "and that is a far greater merit than even your excellent care of the boats and their cargoes. After a time you shall give me the details of your expedition. It seems to have been entirely satisfactory as concerns our interests, and extremely creditable to yourself."

Mr. McGregor then seated himself under the awning of the little cabin beside his daughters, the bourgeois remain-

ing at no great distance, whether pleased or not with her father's commendations Monica could not determine.

The questions and answers upon subjects of immediate personal interest among the trio were followed by little items of general information, among which Mr. McGregor suddenly remarked,—

"By-the-by, Mallie, I had a letter from your friend Mr. Lindsay about ten days ago. It came by the way of St. Louis."

"From Mr. Lindsay?" said Madeleine. "What did he write about?"

"No complaint about you, child," said her father, laughing. "Why do you look so frightened?" Monica fixed her keen eyes upon her sister; then she glanced at Logan, to see if he were within ear-shot. On this point she could not satisfy herself; the young man seemed busily jotting down memoranda in a book which he held in his hand.

"I do not feel frightened—I'm sure I don't know why I should," said Madeleine, with a little, embarrassed laugh. "But please tell me what the letter was about."

"Well, if you do not feel frightened, my darling, you are in a more tranquil frame of mind than our good friend Lindsay was at the date of his letter. I should judge that Winnebagoes, Sioux, Chippewas, Sauks and Foxes, Omahas, Pawnees, and Iowas were all at that very moment knocking at the gates of Quebec. It was with him 'the Indians, and the Indians, and the Indians!'"

"Poor Mr. Lindsay! what can have put him in such a taking?" said Madeleine.

"Why, M. Rivaud, who, as you mentioned in your letter, had been at the Bay, returned with a fearful account of horrors and atrocities committed on the frontier. According to him, the greater part of the savages were engaged daily in scalping, tomahawking, and torturing;

and this, it seems, has set poor Lindsay almost frantic. The thing that puzzles me is to understand what it is all about. Have you so wound yourself about his heart, my little one, that all this solicitude is on your account? He entreats, he implores me—I quote his very words—to send him word what the state of the country really is—whether the more distant trading-posts up the Mississippi and the Missouri will be exposed to peculiar peril—whether parties going out, say in the direction of the Yellow Stone or Red River, will be in danger of falling victims to roving bands, who are taking advantage of the general excitement. I was not aware that Lindsay at the present time had any interest in either of the Fur Companies; indeed, I am sure he has not; and yet, if his whole fortune were at stake, he could hardly enjoin it on me more solemnly and emphatically to send him some word that may put his mind at ease. I cannot understand it—it is so unlike him."

"I hope you wrote to put him out of suspense."

"I answered his letter immediately, but he would hardly get my reply in less than a month. I told him just how things were—that murders had been committed—that the Government had demanded from the Winnebagoes the surrender of those concerned in the recent outrages—that, in case of their failure to comply, there would probably be war all through the country, one tribe taking up arms in aid of another, or else seizing upon this juncture as a favorable one for wreaking vengeance for wrongs of their own. But I told him that our outposts would be in no danger—that there would be friendly Indians to warn the people in case of a threatened outbreak, and enable them to '*get in*' in time. He knows, too, that the traders at the remote posts generally ally themselves by marriage with some one of the neighboring tribes, and that their interests

become so identified that they and their engagés would, in any case, be perfectly safe."

"I don't suppose Mr. Lindsay cares particularly about the traders," remarked Madeleine.

"Is his anxiety about you, then? I wrote him that you had been detained at the Bay, as I had then just learned by your letter which an Indian brought me, along with one from Mr. Logan, from the Portage."

"It is very easy to account for Mr. Lindsay's solicitude," put in Miss McGregor. "His son Malcolm has left his home clandestinely, and doubtless his father is afraid he may have taken a trip into the Indian territory."

"Run away from his home? If I were his father, I should let him run and take a taste of hardships till he was glad to return home and ask pardon. What possible reason, or, rather, what possible excuse, could the boy have for such a step?"

Madeleine was silent. Miss McGregor apparently saw no reason for imitating her sister's reticence—she hastened to say,—

"I believe young Lindsay had every justification. I have heard it said, by those who should know, that his father was harsh and tyrannical, and, in fact, chased his son from his house."

"Astonishing! That alters the case. It is but just, then, that the father should suffer a good degree of anxiety, which it is evident he does. I am afraid that time and good luck have not improved——" He stopped short, as the bourgeois, who had now completed transferring his memoranda to his note-book, approached with the inquiry whether it would be the pleasure of Mr. McGregor that the boats should proceed, or whether he should order them tied up to await the arrival of the military party from above.

"Oh, we will wait, by all means," said Mr. McGregor, rising. "I should not like to depart without having shaken hands with my old friend Colonel Bentley. And, truth to tell, I should have no objection to giving a piece of my mind to our Winnebago——" He stopped suddenly, remembering the feelings of one of his listeners.

"And in the mean time," he said, hurriedly, "I will go ashore and speak to the clerks and the men. How neat and orderly they all look! The whole concern does you great credit, Mr. Logan. Halloo! has that young fellow gone ashore already? He seems as agile as a squirrel! There he is now, round by the farthest boat! And you say he has taken good care of you? You have come through a perilous ordeal, my dear children. If I had known half the dangers that have beset your path, I should have been still more unhappy than I have been."

Madeleine's smile beamed with affection; her sister's brow was lowering and her lips compressed; her father's tone and manner in speaking of the Red Bird rankled.

CHAPTER LVI.

M. TREMBLAY had vanished after the first few words of greeting exchanged with Mr. McGregor. He had wandered off to the camp to make acquaintance with the strange officers, and to take an observation of all that might be going on. In his little gossip he imparted one item which led to prompt action on the part of General Atkinson, who at once countermanded the order already given for starting, and held himself in readiness to receive

Colonel Bentley and his prisoners on the spot where he then was.

But a couple of hours elapsed before the expected boats came sweeping down, with flags flying, arms and uniforms glittering in the sun; and as the band, with keenest enthusiasm, played the inspiring Yankee Doodle, and the oars of the rowers kept time to the strain, the scene was animated and gay beyond what those solitary waters had ever before witnessed. The little fleet passed and saluted, then, turning, headed in to a point near where the Company's boats lay.

The two young ladies were seated under the canopy of their little saloon. Madeleine would fain have remained there until the moment of their departure; Monica was divided between her wish to look once more on Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, and her reluctance to encounter Captain Lytle.

The former prevailed. When her father presently returned with a proposal that they should walk with him to the encampment of the general, and witness the manner in which that officer should receive the prisoners, the elder sister sprang up with alacrity, and, there being no reason that she could assign for remaining behind with only the society of the engagés who were to guard the boat, Madeleine followed her example.

Colonel Bentley's men were speedily formed in two lines, between which he walked as he approached the general, taking the lead, while Wau-nig-sootsh-kah and Wee-kau followed, and the aides-de-camp brought up the rear. General Atkinson, with a discontented scowl, surveyed the whole proceedings.

"One would think they were prisoners of war about being transferred from one station to another," he grumbled. "Just like Bentley! He must have a parade and a spectacle upon all occasions."

When the latter had, with some little "pomp and circumstance" of language, presented the young chief as "a person who had surrendered himself to meet the judgment of his Great Father the President, hoping thereby to save his people from all visitation for the offences of which he and his fellow-prisoner were accused," the reply of the general was couched in terms by no means corresponding in magniloquence.

"I do not understand," he said, "why criminals, murderers of such an atrocious character, are suffered to go in this manner, with the free use of their limbs, and every facility afforded them for making good their escape. I shall take the liberty, in the first place, of putting any such chance out of their power. They should have been in irons from the very outset. That is an observance under the civil law, in regard to murderers, and I see no reason why it should be omitted by us."

"I thought them sufficiently guarded by the vigilant watch we have kept over them, and by the parole given by the Red Bird."

"I much prefer, for my own part, trusting to fetters and handcuffs rather than to the parole of such very slippery gentlemen," remarked the general, with a signal to a functionary who stood a little in the rear. "One of your aides, colonel, will act as special provost-marshal for the occasion, while we make sure that nothing is left to the *honor* of such uncertain characters."

It did not escape Miss McGregor that Captain Lytle made a slight movement forward at these words. She did not believe it was simply through curiosity to witness more clearly the whole proceeding. It had the effect to make him conspicuous, and naturally occasioned his being called upon to attend to the order for manacling the prisoners.

The look of horror and astonishment with which the young chief regarded the approach of the soldiers charged with the execution of this duty, can only be conceived by those who understand the degradation which the loss of bodily freedom implies with the red man. He looked around appealingly, though he uttered not a word. Suddenly his eye lighted on Ewing, who stood within speaking-distance.

"Tell them," said he, in Chippewa, "that I do not wish to be put in irons. I shall not sneak away—I have given my word. Am I *a dog?*"

The young gentleman interpreted the brief speech of the Red Bird.

"Inform him, if you please, that he will have to submit," said the general, curtly. "It is the custom of our people to put those in restraint who fall upon and attempt the lives of women and children."

Ewing softened the harshness of the language, but the act by which the dialogue was followed was susceptible of no amelioration. The bitterness of the spectacle was enhanced tenfold to Miss McGregor by discerning, as she fancied, a gleam of triumph in the eyes of Captain Lytle as he superintended the placing of the manacles on the hands of the two prisoners.

"This is my work!" she said to herself. "It is Lytle who, in revenge towards me, has suggested this indignity."

She turned away, and signed to M. Tremblay to give her the support of his arm.

"I will walk back to the boat, if you have no objection, sir," she said to her father. "This is an unexpected ceremony, and one which I would rather be spared."

"Yes, certainly, let us all go," said Madeleine. And the expression of her wish was sufficient for her father, who

turned and accompanied them, beckoning the bourgeois as he passed.

"Will you have the goodness," he said, "as soon as they get through with these poor fellows, to let one of your men get my valise, which is in Captain Reid's tent, and bring it to the boat? After that we will all get on board and set our faces down the river. The sooner the better."

He took Monica's arm tenderly under his own, and walked with her towards the boat.

"It will only be for a time," he said. "Wau-nig-sootsh-kah must bear it like a hero. If they acquit him of actual murder, as seems most likely, he will be released, and a free man again."

Miss McGregor was not consoled by these words of her father. The very act she had just witnessed would have robbed her of all faith in the justice of the white man where the Indian is concerned; and its effect was to strengthen her resolution to do all, and brave all, to secure a hostage by means of whom she could compel that clemency which by other means she could never hope to attain.

She was glad to hear her father suggest an immediate departure. She did not wish to see again one of her late companions. She would have been glad to know that she should never again be called upon to speak to an officer of the Government she hated; she loathed the thought of communion with those capable of acts so cruel, so tyrannical.

"Far better, far better," she said, in the bitterness of her spirit, "to dwell in the wild woods with the noble in heart, the generous, the tender, and the true, than to share the luxuries of a civilization which sanctions, if it does not teach, craft, and meanness, and injustice!"

Miss McGregor did not pause to ask herself whether it was from the precepts of a Christian civilization that she had learned all that she had practised against Captain Lytle,—all that she was plotting against one still more inoffensive. Indeed, she had no time for self-investigation, for the officers, who had been so long their *compagnons de voyage*, now came flocking to make their farewell salutations.

Mr. Stafford was silent and pensive. He had discernment sufficient to convince him, ere this, that his suit to the pretty Madeleine would be unavailing, and he had determined to restrain himself from any noticeable manifestation of tenderness in his leave-taking. Still, he could not help wondering whether the object of his passion would care if she knew how unhappy he was, and, upon the whole, he thought he would like to satisfy himself that she did not see him take leave with perfect indifference. There was a good-natured concurrence on the part of his brother officers, by which he was left free to say his last words,—a measure they accomplished by thronging around the elder sister, much to her annoyance, and by pouring forth volubly to Mr. McGregor all the news, gossip, and speculation as to future events, which they could call into their service.

Miss McGregor kept up the ball of conversation less out of amiable feeling than from motives of policy. She saw that Logan was at no great distance,—in fact, within hearing of most that was going on. If he should become a little jealous of Stafford, it might be the easier for her to wind herself into his confidence, and so obtain a power over him which could be made available in the future. Monica never overlooked a strand, a filament in the net she was weaving.

The young lieutenant had gathered a bouquet of the

various wild flowers that grew in profusion near their encampment. They were, for the most part, more brilliant than fragrant; yet he had been so fortunate as to find in a sequestered nook one little prairie-rose—a flower whose sweetness is unsurpassed in the gardens of Persia.

"The last rose of summer!" he said. "Will you allow me to offer it to you as a souvenir of the past happy weeks?" then lowering his voice, "weeks that I have found only too delightful." He doubted whether the young lady understood his meaning, for she showed no consciousness; she only said, courteously,—

"Oh! thank you, Mr. Stafford. 'The last rose of summer,' but it did not bloom alone. What lovely companions! They are, I am sorry to say, scentless, though not made so by death. I will try and preserve them alive, instead of scattering them as the poet kindly did."

Stafford, having made a beginning, felt impelled, spite of his good resolution, to venture another stroke.

"There is no help for it. We have to turn our faces towards the Portage, and that before another hour. 'How many deaths are in that word farewell!'"

There was another upon whose ear the words, softly as they were spoken, fell.

"As the young man has not a volume of 'Glorious John' with him," said Logan to himself, "he has that quotation by heart. That shows that he has been in love before,—consequently, this farewell will not contain a great many deaths to him." And this conviction was a comfort to the generous heart of the fortunate rival.

Captain Lytle did not come to say good-by. He was, or affected to be, too much occupied in the service of the general to quit his marquee.

The adieus of Captain Lovel were accompanied by a hearty "Au revoir. I dare say my company will be

ordered to Fort Crawford before winter sets in; and if I can persuade Miss Latimer to come over to the Mississippi with us, I shall certainly do so."

The latter promise was made not so much for Madeleine's benefit as for that of Mr. Ewing, who had been invited to form one of Mr. McGregor's party for the remainder of the voyage.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE mansion of Mr. McGregor had in former years been the abode of a frank and unbounded hospitality. A period of more quiet existence had succeeded, during which *Madame l'Espagnole*, as she was usually called, had sunk under the pressure of ill health, or *découragement*, as her French neighbors were wont to express it, and finally ceased to exist. The latter event occurred about a year after the younger daughter left home for her school in Quebec.

Various stories were whispered as to the cause of this "découragement." The older settlers, if questioned upon the subject, admitted that it was only within a certain number of years that a Christian marriage had united the handsome, stately Madame McGregor with her husband; and there were those who hinted that, be that as it might, Madame l'Espagnole had lived at the head of McGregor's establishment long years before, and that it was during that period that the elder daughter was born.

It was also generally understood that a season had intervened in which Madame l'Espagnole had gone back to her people on the Upper Mississippi, and that some years

elapsed before she returned again to her former lord; also, that her return and her marriage were both subsequent to the birth of the second daughter.

In the years of her first sojourn McGregor did not reside at the Prairie. His trading-establishment was at Koshkonong, on the Rocky River, as it was then called; and as that post was far aside from any thoroughfare of travel,—no white foot, save his own and those of his Canadian engagés, ever pressing the soil,—it was difficult for the most prying and curious to unravel the sort of mystery which hung around this part of the history of the proud and well-favored Scotsman. "Robertson, who lived at the Prairie before the war, knew," it was said, "all about McGregor's affairs; but Robertson was dead many a long year ago."

"Madame Jarrot could probably tell if she would, for she was godmother to Monica, and the bosom friend of Madame l'Espagnole; but Madame Jarrot was herself of the race, and as close-mouthed as if she had not a drop of French blood in her veins."

That McGregor had in process of time acquired or inherited a fortune sufficient to enable him to purchase a partnership in the Fur Company under its new organization was patent to all; and on his having settled himself at the Prairie, and thus laid himself open to speculation from those around, no further facts were arrived at than that Madame l'Espagnole could never have been the veritable mother of the fair and delicate little girl who called her "mama," while that McGregor was her father was decided to be a point beyond question.

Who, then, was the mother of the child? Not the Scotswoman who came with her to the Prairie at the beginning of the war, and who kept charge of her during the year or more that McGregor was absent, nobody could tell where.

No; for Mrs. McCann and her husband returned to Scotland as soon as the war had closed, and no mother would have left so sweet and interesting a child behind her.

"Might the little Madeleine, possibly, be some child stolen by the Indians on one of their journeys to Canada? All know that the Great Sauk trail passed very near McGregor's outposts. Could it be that one of the clerks, seeing this child in their possession, might have purchased it, and McGregor afterwards have taken it off his hands and adopted the little creature as his own? Such things do happen."

Yet the general impression decidedly was that such a thing had *not* happened.

Still, as there were in Mr. McGregor's favor hospitality, frank-heartedness, and neighborly kindness of disposition, together with a lofty sort of independence of the opinion of the world in general (which last, by-the-by, goes a great way in making black white), the simple, affectionate people who formed his social circle did not make it a point of morals to dwell too pertinaciously upon a seeming irregularity.

"For, after all, who was there that used to be married in the olden time, voyez-vous? Was there a priest to be found between St. Louison and Pembinaw? And what could poor people do, I ask you? One must accommodate one's self to circumstances. After the good time when the missionaries had come into the land, I grant you, it would have been wrong to give any cause for scandal. Let us be a little charitable, I entreat you!"

This was the customary mantle of charity thrown over by-gones, and so McGregor was left in peace.

He was, by education, by fortune, and by position, the great man of the place; and, as his countenance and hospitable attentions were matters of prime importance to

those by whom he was surrounded, the great man he must continue to be, spite of all that was come and gone.

The sisters were soon settled in the enjoyment of all the comforts of their home and of the social success which beauty, pleasing manners, and reputed wealth can confer. Invitations to visits, boating-parties, horseback excursions, and other merry-makings, flowed in upon them, not from the families of the Fort alone, but also from their less pretentious friends and neighbors in the little settlement.

Monica would fain have declined them all. A life of quiet solitude, one even of utter seclusion, would have accorded best with the tone of her feelings; but, as she had a purpose in view which could probably only be carried out by the concurrence of others, she mingled cordially and freely in all circles, ever on the watch for circumstances that might be turned to advantage in the prosecution of her schemes.

The two young men Logan and Ewing were becoming fast friends. There was sufficient similarity between them in matters of taste, cultivation, and tone of feeling to make them congenial, and they soon established themselves together as room-mates at M. Tremblay's.

Mr. McGregor, satisfied and at the same time surprised at the systematic supervision which all under the care of one so little experienced had received, had at once placed the young bourgeois at the head of his staff of clerks in the large trading-house.

"But he tells me he does not understand book-keeping," objected Donohue, the confidential agent of Mr. McGregor, who was in no slight degree astonished at this departure from the ordinary routine of promotion.

"What of that? It is a matter of no consequence," said his chief. "A young man who accustoms himself to

keep the diaries and memoranda that Logan has done during this long and trying trip will soon make himself acquainted with every other part of the business. Positively, if I had been upon the journey myself, I could not have had a clearer idea of its details than the journal and notes of this young fellow have furnished me. Really, Patterson exercised more than his usual judgment in selecting a person of such qualifications; and since he is a countryman of your own, Donohue, you had better give him any little hints that may be still wanting to make him perfectly *au fait* of all belonging to his department."

"But what about communicating with the Indians? How will a stranger acquit himself there?" asked the cautious and somewhat jealous Irishman.

"Oh, there is no doubt he will be thoroughly accomplished in that line ere long. I find he has been improving himself in Chippewa — or Ottawa, which is the same thing—through his association with a Courte-Oreille on the route; and then during the short time they were detained at the Portage he contrived, it seems, to take down quite an ample vocabulary from Lapierre and the numerous Winnebagoes lounging around the lodges near the trading-house. Besides, he will now have the advantage of a sort of rivalry with this young Ewing, whom the Governor has sent out here to learn the language and compile a grammar of it. A Ho-tshung-rah grammar, of all things! By-and-by we shall have our Puan music-books and dancing-masters, I suppose!"

"The Governor makes a clever use of his subs," said Donohue, cynically. "It reminds me of a fable I once read, something about some roasted chestnuts and a cat—I forget the particulars. I should not wonder if his Excellency should pass, ere long, for a very accomplished aboriginal scholar."

But, although Mr. McGregor commended the young man so emphatically, and professed such unbounded confidence in him, he did not invite him to any especial intimacy in his family. It was not his custom to admit his clerks to a friendly association, be their merits what they might. People hinted that it was perhaps because he was afraid his daughters might become too sensible of the attractive qualities which some of the young men undeniably possessed.

Logan was, except in a business point of view, in no wise distinguished from the other clerks. He would be invited with his comrades at stated holiday times, or perhaps to a general entertainment which included all the members of the social circle, old and young; but further than that Mr. McGregor's hospitalities did not extend.

Madeleine, from her recollection of the customs in this respect, had had uncomfortable misgivings as to the change which awaited her; and yet she had indulged a secret hope that her father might modify, in favor of one so worthy, something of the strictness of his ordinary system.

It was not so, however; after so long a period of intimate association, the lovers now seldom met, and then only under circumstances where a word or look between the two was scarcely possible.

Miss McGregor speculated much on the probable result of this state of things. Would Logan, accepting as an inexorable fact the barrier which separated him from his master's daughter, ask for his discharge and seek peace of mind in flight? And would Madeleine, in dutiful consideration of her father's wishes, resolve to conquer an attachment so objectionable to him? If so, would she return to her first love, Malcolm Lindsay, whose father now showed symptoms of relenting? Or would she rather be

won by the addresses of some one of the bachelor officers of superior rank, more than one of whom already seemed anxious to be numbered among her admirers?

Neither of these contingencies would suit the plans, now well matured, of the elder sister. Madeleine must not be allowed the chance of another and more watchful lover; least of all must there intervene a military aspirant, who might plead for a prompt and immediate marriage, such as are no rarity in the army. It would never do to leave a loophole for such a possibility; for the prisoners had by this time been tried and found guilty by a civil tribunal.

This verdict was no more than Monica had expected. She was aware that at the time of the Governor's visit, some weeks after the murders were committed, it was still only *surmised* that the marauding party had been Winnebagoes. Yet as, when the elder Day-kau-ray had subsequently been arrested and held as a hostage by the commander at Fort Crawford, such a panic had seized the tribe that somebody had got to take the blame of the transaction, and as Wau-nig-sootsh-kah and Wee-kau had been the persons to do so, it was no more than was to be expected (it was thus that she argued) that the memories of the principal witnesses should become brightened, and that they should recollect enough minute particulars to fix the guilt unquestionably on the prisoners.

The great point now was to sustain the courage of the Red Bird until her plans for his release could be accomplished; and these plans depended in a great measure on a maintenance of the existing relations between Logan and Madeleine. The flame must be kept alive in the bosom of both, for the one would certainly, the other probably, be needed in the accomplishment of the project over which the elder sister was brooding.

To this end the two lovers must be vouchsafed an occasional interview, and it must be the business of the acute and persevering Monica to furnish the opportunities.

CHAPTER LVIII.

"I THINK, Madeleine, you have not been down to the *magasin* yet," said Monica to her sister, one bright afternoon, about three weeks after their return.

Madeleine started. The Company's magasin, as the store was called, at which the little world supplied itself with the ordinary commodities and conveniences of life, was in close proximity to the large warehouse in which Logan had his office and his sphere of duties.

"No," she replied, as tranquilly as she could; "I have not been there."

"Then, if you would like the walk, you had better put on your things and come with me. I am going there to look for some pale-blue beads to finish off the moccasins I have begun for your friend Miss Latimer."

"For Grace? Moccasins for Grace? That is very kind of you. I did not know it was for her you were working—I never dreamed of such a thing."

"And what is there so strange in that?" said her sister, with an amiable smile. "I heard her say, one day when we were at the Bay, that she hoped before her return home to get a pair as handsome as some that a Menomonee woman had sent a present to a lady at the fort; and, as I consider myself at least equal to Mrs. Grisly Bear in the matter of fancy-work, I determined to show your friend a specimen of my skill."

This was so pleasantly said that, together with the prospect of what the walk might bring forth, it raised Madeleine's spirits to a more cheerful pitch than she had felt for several days. She chatted merrily with her sister till they reached their place of destination.

The magasin was a large establishment, the shelves and counters of which were heaped with a variety equal to that of a New England country store. The predominating articles were, of course, such as would be sought after in the Indian trade,—guns, blankets, knives, *strouding*, gay calicoes, boxes of silver-works, beads, and strings of wampum.

Miss McGregor glanced around on entering, and there was a shade of disappointment and vexation upon her countenance as she observed that there was no customer present save an old, dilapidated-looking voyageur who was purchasing a pair of "mitaines" for the coming winter.

"Quite a change since the former times," she remarked to the young métif clerk, who had hastened, at her request, to place package after package of various-colored beads before her. "Do you have no Indian customers now? Have the troubles driven them all away?"

"Pardonne'. The women come now and then, but chiefly from the Upper Mississippi or down on the Rocky River. The Puans of the Wisconsin are afraid of being snapped up to keep company with L'Oiseau Rouge and Le Soleil."

"But they will have to come soon, to attend the payment."

"If there is to be a payment, of which there seems some doubt."

"Oh, there will be a payment, of course. Is not the Government pledged that the people shall receive their

annuities? Be so good as to tell every one you see, that there will certainly be a payment. Runners will be sent to summon them as soon as the silver arrives. It will not be probably more than a couple of weeks before they are notified to assemble here. Tell them," she added, in Chippewa, with which all half-breeds are familiar, "that there is no danger whatever, and that it is best that not one chief or head of a family should be absent.

The youth, with the courtesy of his people, gave a look towards the younger sister, as if he thought it not quite the thing that she should be cut off from the conversation; then he replied, in English,—

"I will give your message."

"And to-day you have not even women to trade with you!" pursued Miss McGregor.

"Pardonne', we soon shall have. There are two or three come in with packs, and they are now in the large warehouse."

"In the warehouse? Oh, then we will go and see them. Madeleine, it is a long time since you have had a peep at the warehouse. It is worth looking at, though, of course, at this season, after the packs have been sent off, it is rather empty."

She led the way to the warehouse, in which they found the bourgeois endeavoring, by gestures and an occasional word of their vernacular, to reconcile a couple of squaws to a bargain in which they thought one of the clerks had overreached them. They were persistent in their endeavors to get more than the established price for a pack of deer-skins,—the women being, as a general rule, more keen and shrewd at a bargain than the other sex. They will haggle and laugh, and say "Woank-hah" (No), and hold up two, or perhaps three, fingers to indicate how many more silver quarters they must have in payment.

The countenance of the young man lighted up with joyful surprise, as he came forward to receive the sisters.

Madeleine looked around at the mococks of sugar, miniature canoes, traps, bales of goods, and all the etcetera of a Company's warehouse, with apparent interest; it was not until her sister turned to enter into conversation with the Winnebago women that she addressed more than a simple greeting to the bourgeois. When she could do so without observation, she said, in a low tone,—

"You never come to see us."

"How can I? I must not intrude into your father's home."

"Not even to call of an evening, as the gentlemen from the Fort, and your friend Mr. Ewing, do?"

"Mr. McGregor has never invited me to become a visitor at his house."

"Perhaps it has been through inadvertence—he is very hospitable."

"I must wait till he remembers to correct the omission. But let us not speak of that. I want to ask a favor of you. Do not go on any riding-party to a distance from home; and never, for any consideration, separate yourself for a moment from your party. Keep close to your escort—to your father, if possible. Will you promise me to remember and comply with this request?"

"Yes, certainly. You gave me a similar injunction before. What are you afraid of?"

Logan held up his finger with a warning for silence. He looked around, and saw that the clerk had returned to his station at a distant desk; then he listened to what Miss McGregor was saying.

"Tshah-nee-kah!" he repeated to himself; "that is *Autumn*—but no, it is a person. 'Where is Tshah-nee-kah? Is he at the Barribault?' she is asking. Surely

Moa-way mentioned his name as one who was plotting in behalf of the Red Bird!"

He knit his brow as he strove to recall every particular that had been told him, and as he endeavored to put together and comprehend the messages with which Miss McGregor was charging one of the women, who seemed brighter and more resolute than her companion.

Madeleine was almost frightened as she watched the countenance of the young man. Never before had she seen on it such an expression of concentrated anger and distress. He turned quite pale as he listened; but when, suddenly, the conversation seemed to take a different turn, and Miss McGregor's voice, from a tone of low, intense interest, changed to a light, business-like accent, he gave an emphatic, defiant motion of his head, then cleared his brow, and, shaking off his frowning look, he whispered,—

"Your sister does not suspect that I understand a little of this language in which she is hiding her communications. And as for the people with whom she is scheming—my own darling, be upon your guard, I again entreat you. Keep close to your own home. These are not times when you—when *any of us*," he corrected himself, as he noticed Madeleine's look of alarm, "can venture unnecessarily. Thank God that I am near, to watch over you! Would that there were some language in which we too could converse without being understood! But there, they have finished," he added, in a low, hurried tone.

Miss McGregor turned towards them and drew nearer.

"Mr. Logan," she said, "I will thank you to give these women an order for a dozen bread-tickets, and a calico shirt-pattern apiece. Have them put down to my account, if you please. I do not happen to have the money with me. They are going to do some Indian work for me, and I have no objection to trusting them to fulfil their bargain."

Without further ceremony, for her mind was absorbed with the conversation that had taken place, she was then hastening away.

The bourgeois beckoned the women to follow him.

"I will walk with you to the magasin," he remarked to Madeleine, "and write the order there. The women will need, too, a certificate of what is due them."

Madeleine was only too happy in the opportunity of a few more whispered words, which she little suspected her sister was affording her by design. The short walk from the warehouse repaid her for all the lonely, weary hours since she and the bourgeois had last discoursed together.

As they came in front of the magasin, their eyes were attracted by a group gathered before the door of the little post-office, which was at no great distance.

"Ah, the Express! the Express!" exclaimed both sisters.

"Now, Mr. Logan, we shall have news from the Bay," said the elder.

"Yes, and from the East—perhaps from Quebec," added Madeleine.

"Cannot some one run over and see whether the bags are opened yet? Ah! there is Bellair—poor fellow! how tired he must be! Do you know they say that he sometimes walks sixty miles a day, and with that heavy mail-bag on his shoulders?"

"Ma-na-hon-ga travelled one hundred miles in a day, scalped his enemies, and made good his escape!" said Miss McGregor, with a proud flash in her eye.

"The walking was the best part of the exploit," said Logan, "seeing that of those murdered only one was of a sex to defend himself."

Miss McGregor frowned at the comment; but, as she could not afford to quarrel with the young man, she let it pass.

Tidings of the arrival of the express had already reached the garrison, and the officers came hastening down to the little building in search of news.

By the time Logan's messenger was supplied with his portion of the mail, the military gentlemen were ready to walk to the magasin, where they had learned the young ladies were awaiting their letters.

Miss McGregor took the package which the clerk had brought. She glanced carelessly at the various addresses; not expecting any letters herself, it was a matter of indifference to her who they were from. She handed one to Madeleine.

"From Grace," the latter said, tearing it open. "And, oh! they are coming! Company K and Company G are ordered here; they are packing up already."

"Well, have you heard the news?" inquired an officer. "Two more companies to be sent here! Won't we have a nice time? It is to be hoped there are but few married officers to be crowded into our well-packed quarters. Who has put it into the wise heads at Washington, I wonder, that we cannot take care of the country around here without help from abroad? Well, there end all parties and entertainments at the garrison for this winter. If an officer has room to brush his clothes, he may think himself well off!"

There was discontent and grumbling on all hands. "Poor Grace!" sighed Madeleine; "I wonder if papa will like to have her come and spend the winter with us! Are there any more letters for me?" she asked of her sister.

"No; these are for my father. One from Quebec," she said, examining a rather imposing one, with no dearth of red wax upon it. "I cannot quite make out the device upon it; the writer's hand must have been rather un-

steady, to make so ragged an impression. Do you know the writing?"

"I think it is Mr. Lindsay's. Perhaps there is a letter for me from Clara inside. Shall we go home now? You know papa likes to have his letters immediately. What a number of papers! Let me carry part of them."

"Will you allow me to take them, instead?" said Logan to Miss McGregor, who accepted his offer graciously, not wishing him to suspect that his recent words had given offence.

The letter with the large seal proved to be from Mr. Lindsay. He had not yet received any intelligence from Mr. McGregor; but a friend from St. Louis had written, giving him the information that a young man corresponding in description with his son had arrived at that place with two or three other adventurous young men, and had proceeded at once to the Upper Mississippi, giving out that they were bound for Selkirk's Settlement.

Mr. Lindsay besought Mr. McGregor not to relax his efforts to find and intercept the young man, and to offer him such counsel as would induce him to give up his wild expedition.

"And say for me, if you please, that if he will return to his home, he shall find no cause for complaint; that I am not disposed to press him upon a point which he cannot cheerfully accede to."

"This is all Greek to me," said Mr. McGregor, handing the letter to his youngest daughter. "Is the young man wanting to turn Mahometan or Methodist? Or is he bent on going on the stage? or what in the name of common sense is the matter? Ah, yes, Mr. Logan—I forgot that I had asked you to wait till I should see if there was anything in these letters that required your attention. You had better, I think, ascertain whether the commanding

officer at the Fort is going to send a special express to the Bay before the regular mail-day. If not, we must find a man to carry our mail at once. After winter sets in, you know, our communication with the world abroad will be rare and irregular. Have the goodness to write to Mr. Malcolm, at Mackinac, that all the tribes are quiet and will make their winter hunts as usual; also, that the payment will be made about the 10th proximo. And here—you had perhaps better read this letter and make all due inquiries whether any such party has been heard of. Was not there a man here from Dubuque's yesterday? You might inquire of him if he has heard anything of such a stranger. A young graceless, to give his father so much trouble!" He handed him Mr. Lindsay's letter.

Miss McGregor stole a look at the bourgeois. Had Madeleine talked to him of her friend's brother? and were any jealous feelings aroused? She had detected a sharp glance towards her sister, and she was sure that Madeleine had colored. Was the news from her old love causing her to regret having taken on the new?

All the way, as Monica had walked to the magasin, although she had chatted with such apparent cheerfulness, her eye had been wandering in the direction of the hated structure in which, fettered, cribbed, and perhaps bereft of the light of day, lay the object of her tenderest solicitude.

She had early sought to interest her spiritual director in his fate; and Father St. Vrain, being a kind and conscientious man, had made more than one effort to engage the accused to receive such instruction as would tend to their eternal welfare; but all his advances had been repulsed.

Wau-nig-sootsh-kah (for Wee-kau remained doggedly silent) "wanted none of the religion of the Big Knives; he was contented with his own faith, which taught him to

punish those who had harmed him, and have done with it; not to inflict a living death for months on those who but made themselves amends for wrongs which they or their people had suffered."

The offer of a visit from Monica was in like manner rejected. "Why should she come but to look upon him and then go away sad and sorrowful?" Thus had the Red Bird cut himself off from whatever of consolation her presence might have bestowed, and Monica could only gaze at the walls of his prison and devour her grief while wearing the mask of cheerfulness.

That part of the family mansion formerly occupied by her mother was now assigned to her and her sister, to each a separate apartment; and in her own especial one Monica passed many hours each day, alternately contriving and rejecting schemes for the accomplishment of the end she had in view.

The bourgeois had, on his part, much food for thought. His chief subject of anxiety was the possibility which shaped itself to his imagination after listening to the colloquy between Miss McGregor and the Winnebago woman. It had been to this effect:—

"Where do you come from?"

"From the lower Barribault village."

"Is Tshah-nee-kah there still?"

"No; he is at his village at Tay-shob-ee-rah." (The Four Lakes.)

"Can you carry a message to him?"

"Yes; it is pretty far. I have two children."

"I shall pay you well for your trouble. Tell Tshah-nee-kah to come to the payment. Tell him the Agent has got the silver all ready, and the chiefs will be notified next week. Tell him Mau-nee-kah asks him to come; she must talk with him. Will you remember the name?"

"Mau-nee-kah—yes," said the woman, imitating with her two hands the slow gait of an animal; "Tshah-nee-kah is to come to the wigwam of Nar-zee-kah?"

"No; my father has shut his doors against the chiefs of the Ho-tshung-rahs. Tshah-nee-kah must come to the wigwam yonder" (motioning with her hand towards a building set apart especially for the Indians). "He must send one of the women of his lodge to me with a bag of cranberries, or a bunch of ducks, or something of the kind, as a present. She will let me know that he is here, and I will go and speak to him. Did you walk from your village?"

"No; my canoe is in the river."

"Good. Now come with me and I will give you some presents,—with some strings of wampum to carry as a token to Tshah-nee-kah. If you do your errand well, I shall give you and your two children each a blanket for the winter."

The bourgeois had observed that Miss McGregor afterwards selected, in the retail store, not only the wampum, but also some beads and ribbons for each of the women. He could not tell whether the latter had any significance further than as a token of good will.

"It is evident that the aid of a person named Tshah-nee-kah is to be secured in carrying out the mischief she is meditating," said Logan, as he turned over all the circumstances in his mind, on his way home to his boarding-house. "*Tshah-nee-kah!* I must remember the name, and keep watch for the person. He is to be here at the payment. Such are the young lady's orders."

CHAPTER LIX.

THE young wife of M. Tremblay, of whom her husband had averred that she was such a "petit ange" that she neither pinched nor pulled the hair of her step-brood, was nevertheless gifted with energies and activities that must find a safety-valve somewhere.

The unhappy sister-in-law, Thérèse, in regard to whose relative position her brother had dropped suggestive hints to Madame Berthelet, came in for no inconsiderable portion of the steam and friction without which the machinery of the ménage seemed incapable of revolving.

The remaining share was pretty equally divided between her servants and such of the "sauvages," or rather "sauvagesses," as presumed to loiter about the yard or porch without having paid an admission-fee in the shape of game, fish, berries, or some other contribution to the larder.

The nine living olive-branches might have furnished a fourth object, had it not been that Madam Tremblay piqued herself upon being a good step-mother, just as she did upon being a good housekeeper, a good hostess, and a good Catholic. What she undertook to do she did with all her might. It was a generally received opinion, however, that she had never undertaken to be a good sister-in-law.

It was the office of "ma sœur Thérèse"* to lay the table and see all things in proper order for the meals being placed upon the table; and as the poor spinster, who was

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* My sister Thérèse.

no longer young, was near-sighted, clumsy, and easily disconcerted, it was not without a considerable amount of demonstration, as well as frequent instances of forgetfulness, that this labor three times in the day was accomplished. Seldom, even with her most conscientious efforts, was the proper complement of cups, plates, knives, and spoons in readiness at the moment of serving the viands. The detection of such deficiency would cause the wicked little gray eyes of Madame to flash irefully as she addressed the withering intimation,—

"Thérèse—point de cuillère!"* or "Thérèse—pas assez de tasses!"†

"Mais, mais!" the poor, frightened soul would exclaim, "quand j'ai compté mon monde tête par tête!"‡ And she would bustle up from her seat at table, generally upsetting her chair as she did so, shuffle to the closet, and bring thence an armful to supply the single article which was lacking.

Ewing, though exceedingly kind and obliging, was too much inclined to play waggish tricks; and he was not long in "colluding and colloguing" with Donohue, who was also a boarder in the Tremblay family, at the expense of the unlucky sister-in-law. They would come early into the breakfast-room and seat themselves, each with a book in his hand, apparently absorbed, yet watching the poor Thérèse plunging around and counting, quite audibly, as she laid down each cup upon the salver,—

"Pour ma sœur Domitile! pour mon frère! pour Mons' Ewing, Mons' Logan, Mons' Donohue, pour mon neveu Jérôme!" etc. etc.

The same ceremony would be repeated with each saucer,

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* Thérèse, no spoon. † Thérèse, not enough cups.

‡ My gracious! when I counted all the people one by one!

each plate, each knife, fork, and spoon. When all were laid in order, Thérèse would heave a huge sigh of satisfaction as she remarked,—

"Les voilà! tous comme il faut—rien de manqué—assurément, rien de manqué!"*

Hardly would the door close behind her before one of the mischievous ones would rise quietly from his seat, slip a cup, a spoon, or a fork from the table, and, opening the drawer of an old-fashioned, seldom-used chest of drawers that stood in a corner, hide away the pilfered article and be seated again at his book before the injured lady reappeared.

To describe the look of astonishment and dismay with which Thérèse, almost before being comfortably seated at table, would hear the startling "Thérèse—une fourchette de manquée!"† "Thérèse—'ienque neuf soucoupes!"‡ would be impossible. Away she would start, to replace that which was missing, with her accustomed,—

"Toutefois, je les avais compté—mon Dieu! mon Dieu!"§

But one day, in making a thorough clearing-up of the dining-room, Mademoiselle Thérèse chanced to open the magpie's hiding-place, when the tricks that had been played upon her stood revealed. The drawer could scarcely be closed for the quantity of "*vaisselle*" that had been abstracted and stored away.

"Mais, mais," she growled, "c'est ce vaurien d'Ewing qui m'a joué ce tour! Je lui rendrai son change. Quitte à quitte et bons amis!"‖ And she turned in her mind in what way she should give him a Rowland for his Oliver.

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* There, they are all right—certainly nothing wanting.

† Thérèse, a fork wanting.

‡ Thérèse, only nine saucers.

§ And when I had counted them—my heavens!

‖ It is that good-for-nothing Ewing who has played me this trick; but I will be even with him. Turn about is fair play.

When Ewing came in to his dinner, which, having no pressing business, he usually did a little before the other boarders, he sauntered into the dining-room to look at the clock—possibly, also, "in hopes some food for humor there to meet." His quick eye was at once caught by a slight change in the ordinary arrangements of the table. The bread, instead of being laid in slices in japanned trays at each end, was placed beside each person's plate.

"This means something," the young man said to himself. He ran to open his receptacle—it was empty.

"Ah! she has found us out!" he exclaimed; and, stepping lightly to the table, he dexterously transferred the piece of bread which had been placed beside his own plate to that of Mademoiselle Thérèse, taking hers in exchange. He had hardly accomplished this feat when Mademoiselle herself bustled into the room. On seeing him she began to chuckle, but she held her lips as tight as nature would permit, that she might not betray herself, and only bobbed her head and smiled when Ewing addressed some civil remark to her; then she hurried out of the room and gave vent to an explosion of mirth quite foreign to her ordinary lugubrious deportment.

When all were seated at table, the soup was served. Thérèse could not restrain her impatience.

"Mr. Ewing, how you like you soup?"

Ewing had ventured, after observing that Madame Tremblay herself had no scruples in doing so, to take a spoonful or two.

"I find it excellent," he said, breaking off a piece of bread and putting it into his mouth with an appearance of enjoyment which puzzled Mademoiselle.

"Not quite enough pepper," she mumbled, seasoning her own soup, in her agitation, rather more than she intended.

"Ah! mais, mais—c'en est trop!" and she bit from her piece of bread a huge mouthful, to temper the fierce pungency. It was adding fire to flame. She choked, coughed, bit again, and then, with flaming cheeks and streaming eyes, looked at her mischievous neighbor across the table.

The trick that had been played her stood confessed. There was nothing for it but to jump from her seat and rush from the room in what was, literally, *hot* haste. The gentlemen preserved, as well as they were able, a decorous gravity until Mr. Donohue, who had been seated next Mademoiselle, took the remains of her piece of bread and displayed to the company the ingenious but not very original contrivance of a wedge cut out of the centre and the opening filled with Cayenne pepper, so very neatly executed that it had escaped the observation of Miss Thérèse, though herself the artisan. Then the laugh became general.

"Mais, mais!" exclaimed M. Tremblay, who did not in the least understand the joke. "Quelle invention de cette pauvre Thérèse! Faire une poivrière de son pain, par exemple!"*

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* What an idea in poor Thérèse, to make a pepper-box of her bread!

CHAPTER LX.

As the time for the assembling of the Indians for the payment of their annuities drew nigh, Logan's uneasiness increased. It was evident that the expected troops would not arrive in time to keep the disaffected in check, should they purpose any hostile demonstration.

Not that he believed that an open attack was meditated. Moa-way had assured him that the chiefs and braves would not hazard a movement of that kind; but that some mischief was brewing—that his beloved was, in some way, to be brought into jeopardy—he was fully convinced; and equally certain was he that her sister was the chief schemer in the plot, whatever it might be. To defeat her plans, it was, then, of supreme necessity that every pass and outlet of the little settlement should be fully guarded, and that Miss McGregor should be hindered from holding communication with her Puan friends, except in the open light of day, and under the watchful supervision of those interested in the safety of her sister.

He was perplexed as to the course he ought to pursue. Should he speak to Mr. McGregor himself, and impart to him his suspicions?

But with what countenance could he, upon such vague and uncertain data as he possessed, go to a father and say, "I am persuaded, sir, that your eldest daughter is concerting measures to injure her young sister, in the interest of the Winnebago prisoners yonder"?

To furnish ground for his suspicions he would merely be able to quote the obscure hints of a strange Indian, and the fragments which he fancied he had understood of a

conference in a language with which he was confessedly not very conversant. Such proofs would appear inconclusive if adduced in disparagement of an utter stranger—how much more, then, when brought forward to Mr. McGregor in crimination of his own daughter!

He discussed the subject in all its bearings with Ewing, whom he had now taken fully into his confidence.

"It seems," said his friend, "that some hundreds of these gentry are expected to be present, as all the heads of families have been invited to assemble here at the appointed day for the payment, about a fortnight hence. We need not rely upon the troops from the Bay as additional protection. We all know that two companies of soldiers, with all their belongings, and some five or six families of officers with their furniture and luggage, cannot be transported up the *chûtes* and rapids of the Fox River and down the Wisconsin in less than a month from the time of starting; so we must give that up."

"Yes; and it is equally clear that the command here will not suffice to keep so thorough a look-out as to prevent any contemplated mischief."

"They certainly will not. But why could not the citizens organize as an additional force? In the way of a volunteer patrol, for instance, they might furnish a pretty effective arm of service."

"Capital!" replied Logan, catching at the suggestion. "I think I will venture to speak with Mr. McGregor about it."

"Suppose, then," said his friend, "that we call there together this evening and broach the subject."

Logan demurred; he could not let slip so good an opportunity of repairing to the house by himself, and possibly securing a few minutes' tête-à-tête with his beloved.

"I will go alone, if you please, this afternoon. I have

a business report to make to Mr. McGregor, who has not been to the warehouse these two days. Some one said he was not very well. If there happens to be any reason why he cannot see me, he may think proper," he said, smiling, "to transact business through a deputy."

"So be it," said Ewing. "If I cannot be of service in occupying the attention of Miss Monica, or fulfilling any other kind office, at least I will not spoil sport. So good luck to you; and I will back to my Winnebago Grammar."

The bourgeois, on inquiring for the master of the house, was ushered into an apartment in one of the wings of the quaint, irregular old building; a room that was called indifferently the library or the office, as it possessed something of the character of both, being fitted up with book-cases, and also with desks and cabinets for the transaction of business. He found Mr. McGregor seated in a large arm-chair, with one bandaged foot supported on a stool, and with drawn features that indicated past and present suffering. Madeleine was seated near him, her guitar leaning against a little table by her side, on which lay an open book. Mr. McGregor's absence from the warehouse was explained even before he addressed Logan with,—

"Ah! I am glad you are come. I wanted to talk with you. You see me tied up here with something or other—erysipelas, inflammatory rheumatism, or what not! Nobody seems wise enough to tell. It may be this new disease, neuralgia—tic douloureux—who knows? It strikes me that doctors, as a general thing, are the stupidest people in existence! Their whole system of practice is a mere experimenting among poisons."

"I am extremely sorry, sir, to see you suffering in this way," said the bourgeois.

"Suffering! yes, it will bear that name." Mr. McGregor's face contracted with pain. "Mallie thinks she

knows better than the rest of them, and she will have it that it is the gout!"

"Oh, papa!" said Madeleine, "you know I was only joking. I know too well how gentlemen resent a suspicion that hints of generous living."

"Unless they happen to be of very humble antecedents," said her father, a little cynically. "In that case I observe they have no objection to the imputation of so aristocratic a visitor."

"I trust, sir, you are not to be a martyr to that excruciating complaint," said the young man, feelingly.

"Thank you. This is excruciating enough, whatever it is. My daughter has been trying first to read and then to sing to me, but I do not find that the mind can conquer the body. It is only our copper-colored neighbors who can sing at the stake. And, speaking of them, I wonder how the two over in the jail yonder bear their confinement! I fancy they don't congratulate themselves much on their late exploit. Poor fellows! or, rather, poor Red Bird! for I confess I do not feel much sympathy with the other."

The bourgeois did not at once reply. He glanced a little uneasily at Madeleine, which her father interpreting, he said,—

"My daughter, I think you will feel the better for a little stroll in the garden. You have been shut up here without breathing the fresh air long enough. It is no light task nursing an old cross-patch like me."

"An old cross-patch, papa, when you are so patient!" said Madeleine, reproachfully.

"Well, run along, and stay till I send for you. And now, what is it, Logan?" he said, turning to the young man. "For I see you have something on your mind."

The bourgeois did not find it an easy task to explain the nature of his apprehensions; yet he contrived, with the

brevity and promptness which had from the first recommended him to his chief, and which were now peculiarly acceptable to one rendered impatient by pain, to lay before him his reasons for believing that some enterprise was on foot which needed to be checked by a display of more than usual vigilance, and by the presence of a greater military force than that which the garrison could furnish.

"The troops we are expecting from Fort Howard cannot possibly arrive in time for the payment, which the Agent has fixed for the tenth of next month, in spite of the remonstrances of Colonel Armstrong; he has sent runners to notify the Indians accordingly."

"The Agent is a fool! Does he not understand that he is playing into the hands of the savages?" said Mr. McGregor, excitedly. "How dare he act in defiance of the commanding officer?"

"I am told he piques himself on disclaiming all subjection to military authority."

"Very well—we will give him a taste of civil law, then. I will thank you, in my name, to wait on Judge Badeau and ask him to call out the militia and have them put in training at once, with orders to take charge of the ground and the proceedings at the coming Indian payment."

"It was the very thing I was going to suggest—that of arming a citizen force. If you have an organized militia, so much the better."

"Oh, yes, we have, or used to have, the Prairie Guards, who are occasionally drilled by some of the officers at the Fort. It is a Canadian company—organized some years ago—soon after Dixon left with his Majesty's—I mean with John Bull's red-coats, who had been holding possession of the place during the late war. Of course, the citizens were all for King George when he was up, and against him when he was down. M. Tremblay can tell

you in what state the little corps is, and who are still on the muster rolls. They had better be got together and exercised. It will be well, as you say, to have an available force at hand without the necessity of awaiting movements which may be crippled by the caprice of an aristocratic functionary; for there is, after all, no saying what these Neechees may undertake if they are bent on rescuing Waunig-sootsh-kah. They understand that, let him have been guilty of all he is charged with, he had provocation enough, according to their code."

"Yet, if the older chiefs are disposed for continued tranquillity, might not this disposition be confirmed and strengthened by a talk in the wigwam with such men as Day-kau-ray, Kar-ray-mau-nee, Man-Eater, and the Little Elk?"

"An excellent suggestion, if I can only get well enough to act upon it. I will do my best to get rid of this tormenting visitor, and to that end will keep myself perfectly quiet. If you see my daughter in the parlor," he added, as the young man rose to go, "please say that I am getting a little easier, and wish to remain quiet for awhile, and that I am going to try to take a nap."

Logan did not see Madeleine in the parlor; and as it was important that he should deliver the message he was charged with, he walked through the broad hall which opened upon a little lawn separating the house from the garden.

In passing the half-open door of Mr. McGregor's bedroom, which was in the rear of the library, he heard the rustle of a silk dress within the apartment.

Could it be Madeleine? No; for at this moment his eye caught sight of her in the garden, stooping over and raising some autumnal flowers which had been beaten down by the wind.

The bourgeois smiled. "There is but one other in the mansion who wears a silk dress," he said to himself. "I wonder if it is her usual custom to possess herself of information in this manner! Fortunately, she can overhear nothing that Mallie and I say to each other in the garden. What a sweet abbreviation! Mallie—my Mallie!"

There was another who soliloquized at this moment, and it was after this fashion:—

"So they are going to call out a volunteer force, and set spies at every corner, are they? Then I must go to work to circumvent them—and it must be Jerome who will help me. It will be but a few smiles and honeyed words expended on the young simpleton, and he is mine for life or death!"

The bourgeois was soon by the side of Madeleine, and had delivered his message; then he looked earnestly and scrutinizingly towards the house.

"Tell me, my darling, which is your apartment?"

"Mine? The one in the farther wing, with the window looking this way. Why do you ask?"

"The one with the window standing open? Have you a spring to fasten it securely at night?"

"I am sure I don't know. I never fastened a window in my life—why should I? I often leave my window open all night in the summer-time. Why, Mark, what put it into your head to ask such a question?"

"Not the wish to frighten you, dearest, if I can induce you otherwise to be on your guard. What I wish is, to impress upon you that things are not now as they formerly were; that the Indians, for instance, are more disposed to be troublesome, and that you must not fail to use every precaution, just the same as if you *knew* they were lurking for their prey."

"What a horrible life to lead! I don't think you know,

Mark, about our Indians—how much they love us—how kind they have always been to us. I would trust those good old chiefs——"

"Yes, so should I, those good old chiefs; but there are some others whom I would not trust. Do you think all who are of their blood love you, Mallie?" He looked penetratingly at her. He felt that it was cruel to awaken a suspicion; but was not her life, or, at least, her safety, at stake?

Madeleine turned pale. "You do not think——"

"No matter what I think. I will tell you that I do not think any severe personal injury is intended you by any one, and you must forgive me if I have alarmed you; but, dearest, all the same you must make me one promise, and that is, that you will keep both your windows and doors securely fastened at night. Will you give me that promise?"

"Even the door between Monica's room and mine?"

"Even that one," he said, "and more than all the rest," he might have added.

"But what," she said, with an attempt at archness, "what if I should have a fainting-fit, or a spasm, or some other dreadful thing, in the night, while locked up all alone?"

"That is hardly supposable, with your fine health and excellent sense. You are not the person to invite such attacks; and although it is possible such a visitation might be sent, yet I believe," lowering his voice reverentially, "the choice of King David should be ours, 'Let us fall into the hands of the Lord, for his mercies are great, but let us not fall into the hands of man.'"

Not wishing to expose the young lady to comment by a protracted colloquy, the bourgeois, after a few more sentences, which had, as he saw to his satisfaction, the effect of restoring the roses to her cheeks, took his leave, little

suspecting that the silk dress about which he had speculated was at that very moment rustling in his own peculiar province,—the large warehouse of the Company's establishment.

Logan found Judge Badeau (he was thus called by virtue of his commission as justice of the peace) seated in his office.

He was a little, plump man, who, spite of the maxim, "An inch of fat on the ribs is worth a Mackinac blanket," was making himself, on this mild day, still hotter by the aid of a great four-plate stove, beside which his chair of state was placed. A couple of clients, of opposite sexes, each striving to out-talk the other, were lifting up their testimony in the Hibernian vernacular, while the judge was endeavoring to bring them to reason in a mixture of *patois* and English.

"And so, if yer honor plase, it's come to this——"

"So, the long and the short of it is, it's no use thryin' to stand it any longer, yer honor; so if ye'll only be so kind——"

"Phoo-oo—stop! taisez-vous, I tell you! Vill you be silence and let me speak? Qu'est-ce que—Vat is it you vant? To get unmarry? Quelle idée pour des bons Catholiques!"

"Yes, we be good Catholics, and we can't live together. Biddy she'd provoke a saint——"

"And that Pat, sir, och! he's the man that 'ud put an ind to a poor woman——"

"If 'twas the last woman on God's earth——"

"Taisez-vous—taisez-vous, sacré! Bêtes—crapauds!" cried the incensed judge. "You will be unmarry? Eh bien—I shall arrange you litt' affair. Vere's your papes?"

"Papes?"

"Yes, your papes dat you got married with! Com-

prenez-vous?" said the little functionary, taking up a folded paper from the table.

"Och! is it the *lines*, yer honor? Here they are," said the woman, producing a greasy pocket-book from her bosom and presenting her marriage certificate.

"Dat's de papes, eh!" said the judge, scrutinizing the document for a moment. "Oui—dem is dem!" Then, opening the stove-door and thrusting the certificate among the burning coals,—

"Dere, dey all gone! now you no be no more married. You can both pay me two shilling and den you can go."

Logan, though amused at the look of blank dismay with which each regarded the burning document, had not the time to spare to watch the finale of the transaction. He delivered the message of Mr. McGregor, and then turned his steps towards the warehouse, leaving the two litigants gazing, in dubious astonishment, alternately at the judge and at each other.

CHAPTER LXI.

JEROME, the eldest son of Monsieur Tremblay, was a clerk of the Company.

His forte, like that of many of the métifs, being his exquisite penmanship, his post was at a desk in the large warehouse. It was here that Miss McGregor found him; and his eyes flashed with delight at the cordial salutation he was accosted with, so different from the cold and distant nod of a few days before.

"Ah! you are here alone! Then I may speak a few words with you; but perhaps I am interrupting you——"

"Interrupt? Oh, never, never! all my moments, you well know——"

"Yes, Jerome, I know very well," she said, with a sigh, "that, among the few I may call friends, you are one that I may count on in any hour of trouble. It is a happiness to me to be able to say so much."

She saw his hand tremble, and that he laid his pen aside from sheer inability to guide it properly over the paper.

"Speak," he said, looking at her with a depth of expression that, hard as she had taught herself to be, somewhat discomposed her. "You know that you have but to command. Give me but an opportunity of showing you that I am your friend—your servant."

"No, no, Jerome, not my servant. It is not *for* me, but *with* me, that I would ask you to work. Have we not common wrongs, common sorrows? Have you forgotten your mother's sister, and my uncle's daughters? It is a frightful story, but, alas! it is too true. Were they not captured by vile boatmen, carried away to St. Pierre and kept for weeks, then returned to their wronged and outraged husbands? And were not their sons and brothers slaughtered and mutilated while attempting to rescue them and to avenge the injury inflicted on those nearest and dearest to them? You have not forgotten, Jerome,—none of us can ever forget,—how one sailor, more brutal, more bloodthirsty than the rest, seized a boat-pole, and with blows assaulted and pushed into the stream our friends, who were striving to rescue the unhappy victims; then sailed away in triumph, with a severed hand and four scalps dangling from his weapon!"

"No, no," hissed Jerome through his teeth, "I have not forgotten. I never will forget—mon Dieu! mon Dieu! never, never!"

"Did the Government," pursued Monica, "ever punish or attempt to punish these flagrant outrages? Among civilized nations—*civilized!*"—scorn blazed from her

beautiful eyes as she uttered the words,—"among the *Big Knives*—that is the term that well characterizes them—a man who receives such an injury shoots down the author of it, and walks abroad unpunished. Our people attempt to avenge themselves, and what is the consequence? Look over to yonder dungeon, and tell me!"

Tears of rage and grief quenched the fire of the previous moment; they gathered, too, in the eyes of the young man, as he said, passionately,—

"Tell me what I can do—what you would have me do!"

"Ah! Jerome, what *can* we do? I would not," in a softer tone, "have you thrust yourself into danger."

"Danger! What do I care for that? What is danger to me, if I can serve you?"

She laid her hand upon the desk, at which he, fearing interruption, had continued seated, as if to support herself. He took it in his own trembling one.

"You know that all my efforts—my life itself—are at your disposal. Only give me an opportunity of showing you of what importance your least wish, your slightest word, is to me."

"Nay, nay, my friend, I am not going to ask so much. I would not have you place yourself in jeopardy; but I must be brief before we are interrupted. Listen to me."

She then proceeded to unfold to him the plan she had formed for the capture of a hostage with which to effect the ransom of the Red Bird. She gave no hint of the person selected for this purpose, but she detailed the measures she had partially concerted with Tshah-nee-kah, and her fears that they might now, after all, fall through, in consequence of the increased vigilance which was to be secured by the addition of the volunteer company to the regular military force.

"Well, what then can be done?" asked Jerome, the

brilliancy of whose inventive powers did not correspond with the intensity of his emotional nature. "How can it all be managed?"

"I heard it said," replied Miss McGregor, "that the French company (which, of course, includes all the métifs), having lain inactive and neglected for some time past, would have to be in a manner reorganized—new officers appointed, and so forth. Don't you think, Jerome, that you would be sufficiently popular to get chosen captain? I am sure," she said, with one of her most beaming smiles, "that *I* would give you a dozen votes, if I had them."

"Thank you—how good you are!" said the young man, almost choking with excess of feeling. "But for my being chosen, I do not know; there are so many older than me. There is Jarrot, and Olivier, and Le Mai——"

"And your father," said Monica, with a sudden bright thought. "Ah! that is excellent! Why would not your father do, admirably?"

"But my father would give way to me. You would rather have *me?*" said Jerome, in a tone of jealous anxiety. "Who would do for you as much as I would? And then I have exercised with the company, and know all the manœuvres, which my father does not."

"That is true, and, therefore, you would of course be the most eligible; only, as I might have need of you by my side throughout the payment, I was thinking whether your military duties would not interfere——"

"Yes, yes," said the young man, eagerly, "they would interfere—they would keep me away from you. If I could only get some person to propose my father, which I am afraid it would not occur to any one to do! Oh, no! nothing must keep me from your side!"

He pressed still more closely the hand which he had continued to hold clasped in his.

"Monique, you will not forget—you will not call on any other but me? Remember, I am all yours, body and soul—yes, soul; all, all!"

Monica extricated herself.

"We must think of duty first of all, Jerome; and this is a solemn duty, is it not?—a duty which we owe to the dead and to the living! Let us accomplish this first."

"Yes, yes; I will ask no favor—no reward but the pleasure of serving you. If, in your matchless goodness, after we shall have succeeded——" He looked wistfully at her.

"Monique knows how to acquit her debts," she said, with an air of maiden modesty. "As for the nomination of your father for the post of captain of the company——" She pondered, then exclaimed, with sudden inspiration, "Ask Mr. Donohue, your boarder, what he thinks of the election of your father. If it strikes him favorably, he can mention it to Gautier Jarrot and a few others, and the choice will be secured."

Monica understood perfectly that such an absurdity was a thing that would jump with the humor of the mischief-loving Irishman.

"I will propose it to him this very evening," said Jerome; "and I will come up and let you know——"

He broke off, warned by approaching footsteps to attend to the writing which was before him, while Miss McGregor turned and calmly walked a few steps, to meet the bourgeois face to face.

Logan stared in amazement. He could not believe it possible that she had already not only reached the warehouse, but, to all appearance, accomplished the errand which had brought her.

What that errand could have been, puzzled him. Not to see *him*, for, by listening, she must have ascertained

that he was at her father's house, and also have overheard the message to Judge Badeau which he had been charged to deliver.

"Her first business would naturally be to counteract our plan of adding to the guards on the day of payment; but how?" Logan questioned to himself. "Surely," with a contemptuous smile, "she is not proposing to take our simple Jerome into her counsels, and rely on any aid *he* can afford her in her schemes!"

The young métif, meanwhile, wrote and wrote, feeling instinctively that the eye of his bourgeois was upon him. He had frequent occasion for the use of his penknife and pounce-box, which only made him the more nervous, an erasure being a blemish which his superior regarded with but little toleration.

"Is the invoice of Maillet's outfit copied, Jerome?" asked Logan, after a few moments.

"Not yet—not quite, mon bourgeois. I will soon have it finished."

"She has been talking to him and keeping him from his work. It will all come out by-and-by," was Logan's mental comment.

And it did come out at the tea-table, when Jerome, true to his engagement, began,—

"Father, there is a talk of getting our militia into order again, to act as guards till the Indian troubles are over."

"Where did you learn that?" asked Logan, quietly.

The young man blushed scarlet.

"Oh, the boys were talking about it. They thought it would be a good plan, at least," he said, hurriedly.

"Let me see; what was the name of our old company?" said Donohue. "'The Cannuck* Grannydears,' wasn't it?"

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* The cant and rather depreciatory name for Canadians.

"There was no Cannuck about it," said Jerome, resentfully. "There were very few Canadians in it. My father, it is true, is from La Marriale,* but he is a Frenchman for all that, just as much as you, Mr. Donohue, are an Irishman. And as for me and Olivier and the Jarrots, we are métifs, or more than métifs—we are no Cannucks. It is not a civil thing to call names."

"Why, bless my heart, boy, what makes you so touchy?" said the Irishman. "Now, if I had had such a nice young lady to call on me as you've had this afternoon, I would have been sweeter than mountain-dew."

Jerome bent over his supper, striving to look as if he had not heard the remark. His step-mother took up the word with animation.

"Ah ha! And who was that, if you please, Monsieur Donohue?"

"I can't justly say who. You must ask Jerome," was the mischievous answer. "I did not see her face; I only heard her silk gown rustle."

"Silk gown! Then it is easy to tell who it was; for our young girls are generally not too proud to appear in a dress of *indienne*† on a weekday. It was Monique McGregor! Jerome, I hope you are not so weak as to be letting her make a fool of you a second time?"

"Jerome can take care of himself," growled the young man, without looking up.

"Hi, hi! speak like dat to your maman?" exclaimed his father. "Don't you know, mon gars, dat God not love you if you quarrel and be hugly?"

"Let him speak," replied Madame, with a nervous laugh, "and I too will speak—me. Monique is not to be trusted. I know her well; we were girls together at

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* Montreal. † Indian calico.

the Ladies'. C'est une '*pince sans rire*,'*—that's what she is. Jerome will find it out. She wants something of him now, and therefore she will be sweeter than all the flowers of the garden; by-and-by, when *he* will like, may be, to be a little sweeter than the flowers with her, it will be like the little play, 'Parlez-moi, mais ne touchez-moi pas.'† That is what Jerome will find out, if he waits long enough."

"Oh, ma vieille.‡ A young lady comme il faut, like Mademoiselle Monique!" playfully remonstrated poor M. Tremblay, anxious to pour oil upon the troubled waters.

Madame had shrewdness enough to understand that it comported best with her own dignity to abstain from entering into an argument with her lord and master. She merely remarked, therefore, with a superior air, "I shall not return the compliment of Monsieur by touching upon the subject of ages. Let us rather return to our sheep. What is this about a militia company? I, for one, shall be glad if people are going to be more on their guard against the savages. I do not trust them—me—neither man nor woman."

The conversation had been hitherto carried on in English, which Madame Tremblay spoke, and Monsieur believed himself to speak, very well. Poor Miss Thérèse, who understood only her own vernacular, was thus quite cut off from the conversation, and could only sputter forth an occasional interjection, or sit silent with her under lip hanging in such a despondent fashion as now and then drew from her sister the ejaculation, "Gueule de vache!" a figure of speech which she took care, however, should

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* She's a "pinch without laughing;"—a proverbial expression for a sly, mischievous person.

† Speak to me, but don't touch me.

‡ My old woman.

not reach the other end of the table, where sat her husband and her son-in-law Jerome.

The latter was not slow in taking the hint of returning to the chief topic of interest. He began by feeling his way with the remark,—

"I wonder who will be chosen captain of the company? I think my father, one of the oldest settlers of the place——"

"Oh, no, Jerome! I am not so very old—me. There is Bazaine is a great deal older; and there's old Augustin——"

"No, no, monsieur," cried Donohue, seizing the idea. "What your son means is, foremost in point of standing; fittest to command the citizen military—the Canadian Fusileers, or whatever the honorable corps may be designated. We want a man of position and influence. You shall be our major, for the Prairie Guards and the Fusileers can be formed into a battalion. You shall organize us, and drill us, and bring us into the field. All the world shall see how we acquit ourselves under such a leader!"

"I suppose it will be well, then, to order our new uniforms at once," chimed in Ewing.

M. Tremblay looked from one to another, half bewildered, but wholly delighted.

"Oh, you speak dis 'rien que pour badiner,'"* he said.

"Not in the least—we are perfectly serious. You are the proper man," protested Donohue. "We must call a meeting at once, and get the matter under way. We will nominate you, and there cannot be a doubt of your election. You are very popular; I suppose you know that, don't you?"

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* Merely in jest.

"Popular? Dat I have got one ver' large family—good many childrens?"

"No, no, my dear sir; that you have got a good many of the hearts of your fellow-citizens. Who is there that would not vote for the excellent Monsieur Tremblay?"

"You tink so?" said Monsieur, swelling and looking a little pompous. "Eh bien! It is one ver' good ting to be populous—to have much people like me for captain. But for de drill, which I not comprend too much, and de exercise——"

He looked ruefully at Donohue for a further suggestion.

"Oh, that is soon learned," said the mischievous Irishman. "You can look on while your lieutenants put the men through their exercise, and you have merely to remember all the different manœuvres and their names."

"Non, non," objected Monsieur, drawing himself up "I shall do better as dat. I shall learn it all right—me. When I be choose, den, de fust ting, I march straight up to de fort and call on one officer, my friend. An' I kindly borrow de loan of his book of tick-tack, and I come home and set me down; study my lesson; learn it all, every word; come out on de ground; call out de orders to de company; let dem see dey got one good general dat know someting. Dat de way I shall do my good duty comme il faut!"

CHAPTER LXII.

Miss McGregor returned home slowly, pondering, as she walked, upon her interview with young Tremblay. She had only her own heart to commune with now, for she had not resumed her accustomed intimacies which,

before her journey East, had helped her to pass away the time.

Moreover, she had laid aside her long-established custom of frequent confession. There were things now in her heart and in her life that she could not impart even to her spiritual director. She frequently caught herself wishing that she could dispose of all matters of conscience as easily as her friend Sophie.

"I always," said that ingenious young lady, "commence with, 'My father, I have not committed robbery—I have murdered no one; of all the other sins of the calendar I confess myself guilty, and repent of them. Absolve me from my transgressions.'"

But could she indeed, like her friend Sophie, wipe out the sins of robbery and murder from her catalogue?

"Oh, yes, yes," she protested to herself. "Tshah-nee-kah will be gentle and kind to my sister. He will take care that no harm happens to her!"

But what were Tshah-nee-kah's antecedents? The question would force itself upon her. Whose hand had, as she never allowed herself to doubt, taken the life of the innocent Gagnier? And could she deny that she had calmly contemplated the possibility of the cruel chief's adding to his list of atrocities? Then, the manner in which she had enlisted Jerome in her service! Could she, even in the confessional, avow the arts by which she had gained his promise of aid in contriving that the militia should be withdrawn from their patrol on the evening succeeding the payment?

Ah! if she could but go back to the innocent days when she was a school-girl at "the Ladies'!" when the trembling recital of her youthful peccadilloes was wont to be made to the good old Father Marcel, not seldom interrupted, in defiance of all rule and custom, by his astonished

exclamation, "Tut, tut, tut! You do that again! Didn't you promise me you'd never do so any more?"

Alas! alas! the array that would now have to be presented would be such, Monica told herself, as to chain the tongue of even Father Marcel with horror. The avowal of what she meditated, no less than of what she had done, would insure, she well knew, penance upon penance. For them she cared little; but it would also make certain the abortion of her schemes, and that she would not, could not risk. No; let her enterprise succeed, and Wau-nig-sootsh-kah be rescued, and she would make her peace with Heaven as she best might! This was ever the winding-up of her self-communings.

The joint efforts of Jerome and Donohue, to which Ewing, not suspecting the possible consequences, lent a helping hand, were crowned with success. M. Tremblay was elected major of the battalion, comprising what remained of the Prairie Guards and the Canadian Fusileers —the latter chiefly recruited from the employés of the Fur Company, to whom it was a matter of fun, first to aid in securing the election of M. Tremblay, as well as, afterwards, to witness the efforts of their new commander to discharge the duties of his position. The worthy gentleman's plan of studying up his routine of duty did not work well. Being remarkably deficient in the power of memory, he would get the different orders inextricably confused in his mind, so that when he would take it upon himself to review his battalion, as he insisted on doing every evening after the regular drill, he was under the necessity of carrying his "book of tick-tack" to the ground, by way of prompter. But here would arise another difficulty. Though he could read a little English, he was not sufficiently posted in military matters to understand the meaning of the orders which he read. If he could have issued the words of com-

mand in French, it would have been better; as it was, his only resource was to beckon up his son Jerome from the ranks every time he became hopelessly puzzled—then whisper,—

"Quien, mon fils—qu'est-ce que ça veut dire*—*Shoulder arms?*"

Jerome would translate and explain.

"Très-bien—retire-toi aux rangs!"† with a wave of his hand towards the battalion.

"Shoulder—arms!" he would then thunder forth, in stentorian tones.

Soon he would "get mired" again, as the farmers say, and again it would be, "Jérôme, viens icite!"‡ and once more Jerome, greatly to his annoyance, would be beckoned forward, to go through the ceremony of explanation.

All this was highly amusing to the lookers-on, and it soon got to be the regular afternoon recreation of the officers of the garrison to stroll to the militia parade-ground and enjoy an exhibition of military science.

Madame Tremblay was indignant when she heard of these proceedings.

"What will you have?" she asked of her new friend Mrs. Smart. "A Frenchman cannot be born a Yankee, let him try ever so hard. I dare say the major will do extremely well in time. Not that I think he will ever be a Napoleon—pas si bête. J'appelle un chat un chat, moi."§ And Mrs. Smart, who had picked up a smattering of Canadian French from "her Corbin," nodded her head understandingly, and gave her friend due sympathy.

Thus matters went on till the day preceding the payment. Mr. McGregor had so far recovered as to be able to be

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* See here, my son, what does that mean?

† Very well—go back to the ranks. ‡ Come here.

§ I am not so silly. I call a cat a cat, for my part.

driven in his low calèche to the warehouse, to hold a talk with the Indians, and to admonish them upon the subject of quiet and peaceable behavior.

Logan had found it indispensable to call upon his chief once or even twice a day during his seclusion, to report to him the progress of matters under his charge, or to furnish him with items which he fancied would be of interest.

"No tidings of that young fellow from Quebec yet?" Mr. McGregor asked him, this morning.

"None whatever. I hailed a flat-boat that was passing down the river yesterday afternoon, and made inquiries if any one on board had seen or heard of such a person; but the answer was the same as heretofore."

"My opinion is," said Mr. McGregor, "that the young man has gone to Europe; Mallie says he probably was not without means for the trip. Still, as his father seems greatly disturbed at the accounts they get of the Indian troubles, and makes, in his last letter, the suggestion that at the coming payment I should institute inquiries whether any such person has been heard of, either among our Indians or among the Ioways, Sauks and Foxes, and so forth, I wish, in case I forget it, that you would remind me to touch upon the subject to-morrow."

Logan promised compliance with the request, and Mr. McGregor turned to another topic.

"The Indians seem arriving in very small numbers. I should say, from the few lodges scattered around, that not more than a fourth of the heads of families are present."

"And scarcely any women and children," said Logan.

"That is a singular circumstance,—one that I do not like the looks of," said Mr. McGregor. "The women are the guardian angels of these people. If an unprincipled

trader, or other person, has contrived to evade the law and furnish the men with liquor, the women immediately gather up all the knives and other weapons of their husbands, brothers, and sweethearts, and hide them, so that if there should arise, as is most likely, a drunken quarrel, the participants in it can do each other but little mischief."

"But if their object is an attack on the whites, I presume we need not count on the influence of the women to prevent it?"

"I suppose not," said Mr. McGregor.

"Then the absence of the women must doubtless be looked upon as an alarming augury?"

"Alarming? Well, yes; we may as well own it, for, after all, there is no such thing as being brave with such a foe. We never know what they will be at. I shall talk very plainly to the chiefs; and as they will see our friend Tremblay and his forces by-and-by," he added, with a smile, "we will hope that they may be thoroughly intimidated."

"I suppose," said the young man, with a little hesitation, "there is no danger of their making an unpleasant visit to your own home, sir?"

"Oh, no—not in the least. Monica is present, and, in fact, they regard us as of themselves. It is only in behalf of the poor unprotected settlers on the outskirts that I have any fears."

"Still, would it not be wisest to stand upon one's guard—to assume that in the present excited state of feeling they mean mischief whenever and wherever they can find an opportunity for practising it?"

"Of course all must be upon their guard. My observation of the Indians, however, makes me pretty sure that they are going to practise no mischief under the guns of a

fort, with militia companies ready to rush into the field at beat of drum, and, moreover, with two of their number lying incarcerated and at the hazard of any retribution that the strongest party—that is, the Government—may think fit to mete out to them."

Logan saw it was in vain to attempt to open the eyes of his chief to the existence of a danger whose nature he could not declare to him. There remained only to keep up an anxious vigil, and to reiterate to Madeleine the strongest injunctions to watchfulness and circumspection.

CHAPTER LXIII.

Miss McGregor had been in a state of nervous excitement for many days preceding the payment.

She had had frequent interviews with Jerome, generally in stealthy walks along the river-bank which extended at the foot of her father's garden. At the evening hour she selected there was little danger of encountering even a chance passer-by, by whom their conference might be observed.

She had bound the young man to her, as he said, "body and soul." She felt certain that he would not hesitate even at crime, should she require at his hands the commission of such. He had engaged that the military patrols should all, at a given hour, be disposed in precisely the directions where they could be of no avail when wanted; and as his guerdon, he had already received more of grace and favor than he had dared to hope would be vouchsafed him until his task should be fulfilled.

Monica, to insure success, had gone further than she intended; but what of that? She could retrace her steps, she assured herself, when reserve should not be impolitic; till then she must do as circumstances demanded. The end would justify the means.

The time, however, was flitting rapidly, and she heard nothing from Tshah-nee-kah. Her Barribault messenger had not returned, nor had any other emissary come to apprise her of the concurrence of the old chief in whatever arrangements she might make. As her thoughts grew dark and gloomy in the anticipation of a possible failure, her feelings towards her sister were less those of compunction than of added bitterness, as if she were somehow accountable for this disappointment of her schemes.

The window of her apartment looked out over the wide-extended plain whence the settlement derives its name, and which at this period could boast of few habitations, save the small hamlet of *St. Friol*, as it was called, and a few scattered dwellings of the Canadian settlers.

Although it wanted now but one day of the payment, she could discern, as her eye took in the whole view towards the base of the cliffs, only here and there a matted lodge, giving token of the arrival of chief or brave or head of a family.

What could it mean? The scene was less animated than in former days she might have witnessed it on any bright autumnal morning. She resolved to walk down to the vicinity of the magasin and seek for information. She might at least, she thought, learn what the prospect was of a general assembling of the head men on the following day. She put on her hat and shawl, and slipped quietly out through a side gate, that she might, by a little circuit, reach the high-road without attracting the observation of her sister.

As she passed through into the lane, she came suddenly upon an Indian woman seated upon the ground, with a sack of netted cordage beside her, the strap of which, lying upon her knees, showed that the burden had been carried in the manner of a "pack."

"Bon-jour!" was the salutation of the woman as she rose to her feet. Then followed the hesitating query, "*Mau-nee-kah?*"

"I am Mau-nee-kah. You have brought me a message?"

"Yes. Tshah-nee-kah has sent me."

"He is here? That is, he is in one of the lodges yonder?"

"No; he is at the Four Lakes."

"You mean he was there when you started, but he will be here to-day—to-night—or to-morrow morning? He should have hurried. There is no time to lose; the payment begins to-morrow."

"Tshah-nee-kah will not come to the payment."

"Not come to the payment? Who has he sent in his stead?"

"Some of the young men in his lodge will bring his bundle of sticks."*

"Does he send one of his young men to me, in his place?"

"I do not know. Tshah-nee-kah said nothing to me."

"What message did he give you, then?" said Miss McGregor, trembling with agitation.

"That he should not come to Tee-pee-sau-kee with the rest."

"He has always attended the payments before."

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* A slender bit of stick for each member of a family is the tally by which the Agent apportions the amount of coin to which each lodge is entitled.

"Yes. The Big Knives were his friends then."

"Are none of the chiefs coming?"

"Yes. Naw-kaw, and Day-kau-ray, and Hoo-wau-nee-kah, and Kau-ray-kau-sah-kah."

"They are brave men—*they* are not afraid! And Tshah-nee-kah," with a look of intense scorn, "is afraid, I suppose."

"Perhaps."

"He thinks, may-be," said Monica, forgetting prudence in her excitement, "that the widow Gagnier's eyes will be scanning sharply all those who come to receive their silver."

There was a dark flash from the Puan woman's eyes, but not a muscle of her face moved, nor did she utter a word in reply.

Miss McGregor recollected herself.

"Tshah-nee-kah will, however, not forget," she said, "that his friends lie chained in prison—that his relative Wau-nig-sootsh-kah will succumb and take his departure for the spirit-land if he is left much longer to pine in darkness and solitude. When Tshah-nee-kah walks, a free man, across the broad prairies, and breathes the wholesome, pleasant air, he will remember that there is a way by which those fast bound in misery can be set free, and he will come to Mau-nee-kah to learn how to play his part in the matter."

"Tshah-nee-kah will not forget his friends," said the woman, briefly.

"Then by-and-by—when he judges it best—when success is most sure, I will expect him. Let him send and apprise me. Together we can concert measures. Tell him that Mau-nee-kah had everything arranged, so that the plan we had spoken of together could not have failed. Now we shall have to contrive some other scheme. Tell him to let

the time not be long. Tell him that Wau-nig-sootsh-kah's friends here are forbidden to see him—that there are none to cheer him in his gloomy cell—that his heart will break——"

She stopped as she found her voice growing less assured.

The woman stooped and gathered her sack into her arm. She did not pass the strap over her forehead, neither did she, according to the custom of her people, throw the contents of the bag at the feet of the one to whom she had come with the message. She was turning away without again looking upon Miss McGregor. There was something stately in her air. She was tall and well formed, and her face had less of the tanned and haggard look than is usually seen in the women of her people after they have passed their early youth. There were also a neatness and taste in her dress beyond what are ordinarily observable.

"You will be careful to deliver my message to Tshah-nee-kah!" the young lady repeated, in an earnest tone. "You will not forget?"

"I will not forget," said the woman, in a deep tone that startled her hearer. Like lightning it flashed across her who it was that had sought the interview. She made a step forward and laid her hand upon the arm of the stranger.

"Way-noo-nah!" she exclaimed.

The two women looked at each other, and there was in the eyes of each the same glare of deep and deadly hatred.

It was not tempered in the Christian young lady by any sentiment that raised her above the heathen child of the forest. She was gazing upon her rival—the one who had a *right* to love the Red Bird—who could perhaps claim the privilege of visiting him and ministering to him, should it please her so to do.

And, with strange inconsistency, Monica hated her the

more that she had manifested no sensibility when the sad and suffering estate of the young chief had been alluded to.

She longed to ask if it were Way-noo-nah's intention to seek an interview with her husband. Her *husband?* Was it for another woman's husband that she was wearing out her life in grief and longing? Oh, no, no! The Red Bird did not now belong to the daughter of Tshah-nee-kah. She had herself broken the tie that had bound them together—so, at least, Monica strove to persuade herself, as her gaze continued riveted on that of Way-noo-nah.

Whether the latter divined aught of what was passing in her companion's mind she gave no sign, except by a more rigid and, as Monica fancied, a more defiant look; then she turned away, with the quiet words,—

"I will give your message to Tshah-nee-kah. Way-noo-nah does not forget." She passed the strap of her slight burden across her forehead, and took her way in the direction of the warehouses.

Miss McGregor remained standing in the same spot, gazing after the retreating form of the young woman. She saw her turn aside towards the homely little structure which fulfilled the office of a jail, and her heart beat almost to suffocation.

"She is going there! She will obtain permission to see him!" such were her torturing thoughts; "his condition may awaken her tenderness, if, indeed, it has ever slumbered. Who knows but this act of devotion may call forth a sentiment of affection in the breast of one to whom kind words and ministrations have been long strangers!"

She waited and watched. Way-noo-nah turned past the front of the little building, then was lost to view.

Had she entered, or was she pursuing her way towards some one of the lodges in the distance?

While pondering these questions, a step coming up the little lane from the river broke her meditations.

It was Jerome, who, with beaming eyes and a sort of privileged, caressing air, took her hand. She had need of all her self-command to restrain her from flinging from him and making palpable the feeling of repulsion with which he inspired her.

But this she dared not do. She must tolerate him a little longer. She had registered a vow in her own heart, though surely in no more holy place, that she would effect the liberation of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, and that object had acquired double importance within the last half-hour; for was there not now the added incentive of separating him from Way-noo-nah? And could anything be accomplished unless she had ever at her beck and call a devoted slave like the poor, infatuated Jerome?

Even these convictions, as they rushed through her mind, did not enable her to assume an air of gracious welcome as she addressed the young métif with,—

"Well, what is it, Jerome?"

"I thought," said the young man, with a blank look at this unexpected change, "that I had better come and, if possible, talk matters over a little with you. So I took my canoe and paddled up the river, while my bourgeois was engaged in the council-room acting as your father's secretary. I think I might have done as well as M. Logan. I write a better hand, and I suppose I understand Puan quite as well as he can pretend to. If I had not met you, I was going to send you a little note to say that I was down under the willow-trees at the old place."

"It is not very pleasant to be obliged to say it," said Miss McGregor, gloomily, "but all that we have done and planned will go for nothing. Tshah-nee-kah does not

come to the payment. I have just got a message to that effect."

"Not come? Oh, my poor Monique, what a disappointment for you! I thought there was something the matter," he said, greatly relieved, and throwing a degree of tenderness into his accents for which their object wished him under the waters of the Mississippi. "But never mind; we will contrive something else. Confide in me. Do I not belong to you? Would I not move heaven and earth to carry out your slightest wish? Have you thought what is to be done, now that everything has to be commenced anew? No? Though of course you could not yet. What a blow! Let me help you to bear it. Come with me, and sit for a little while down on the river-bank, and lean your head on my shoulder and let me comfort you."

Miss McGregor started, almost as if an adder had stung her. Had she, in her reckless pursuit of her schemes, brought herself to this? Did Jerome feel that he might presume in this way? And how was she to shake him off? How was she even to keep him at a distance? Had she not leagued herself with him in such a way that she was in his power? To attempt to repulse him would be all the more dangerous because he was so weak-minded. He had, as she well knew, a certain strength of his own—it was in his will, his cunning, and his passions.

She could not break with him, at least not at present. She forced herself to say with calmness, in answer to his invitation,—

"No, Jerome, I cannot go to the river-bank now. It will soon be our dinner-hour, and my father will be inquiring for me. Besides, of what use is it to attempt to plan anew, until we have well considered all circumstances and settled what we *can* do next?"

"But we can consider and settle together, Monique. You cannot do without me,—you have said so. And I—can I live a day without you? Could I live an hour if I had not the sweet thoughts of all your goodness, all your promises, to feed my heart upon?"

Miss McGregor's thoughts were very bitter, as she said, mentally, "Always harping upon that string! Verily, my punishment has begun!" Then she added, aloud,—

"You will understand, Jerome, that this disappointment has been a terrible shock to me. It has made me almost ill, and I must get to my room and lie down awhile to recover myself."

"It is so amiable in you, my poor angel, to care so much for this unhappy Oiseau Rouge, who is not, after all, so nearly related to you as the Black Wolf or the Little Thunder." Then, observing that the brow of his lady-love contracted, he added, with passionate tenderness, "You are so unhappy, and I can do nothing for you! Only promise me that you will come this evening——"

But Miss McGregor, suddenly exclaiming, "There comes my father!" broke from him and retreated through the gate, while the young man, with the celerity and adroitness of his mother's people, slipped away to his canoe and paddled himself back to his post of duty in the warehouse.

CHAPTER LXIV.

MONICA with effort summoned sufficient composure to meet her father at dinner; that task over, she was at liberty to retire to the seclusion of her room and meditate.

The most bitter ingredient in her cup was not the disappointment of learning that Tshah-nee-kah would fail to attend the payment. She doubted not that his own sagacity had taught him that a later and more quiet season would be the one best suited to the execution of their plans.

"If only that season would not be too long delayed! If the Red Bird would not be left in chains and darkness till his spirit would sustain him no longer! If he would but have faith in her efforts for his release! If he would trust to the promise that she had at least implied, to fly with him and be his in the regions far beyond the ken of their hereditary enemies!"

But there had come this new source of torment—Waynoo-nah's visit to the Red Bird. What might be its result? The time had been when Monica would have been humbled to the dust at the thought of such speculations; but she was of late gradually losing whatever tenderness of conscience she had formerly possessed to admonish her in the path of duty.

There was also another and more immediate source of perplexity,—the attitude which Jerome was assuming. How had she permitted him to insinuate himself into the position to which he now evidently felt himself entitled? She had, as she now believed, over-estimated his importance as an aid in carrying out her plans; and yet there

was just a possibility that an emergency might arise in which his services would be indispensable: therefore she did not dare to break with him.

Indeed, for other reasons she would not have ventured. Had she not, in order to secure his co-operation, imparted to him the whole scheme she had concerted with Tshah-nee-kah, even revealing to him the name of the hostage of whom the unscrupulous Puan was to possess himself? Had she not worked upon the young fellow's love for his mother's people, by representing her sister's hostility to them, until every hesitation on his part had been overcome, and his entire concurrence in her scheme pledged? And had she not held out hopes to Jerome which it would not be safe to disappoint? Her heart died within her as she reflected that he was capable of meeting treachery with treachery, and of blazoning abroad to the world, and, most terrible of all, to her father himself, "thus and thus has she done."

On the other hand, quietly to tolerate the attitude that he had this day as a matter of right assumed, every womanly instinct revolted against that. Revolted, now that she gave the matter consideration and reflection, though it did not escape her recollection that she had, on more than one occasion, while rehearsing to him the wrongs of their people and the sufferings of their friend whose rescue they were planning, allowed him to feel that his caresses and words of tenderness had power to soothe her.

She had said to herself that Jerome was a simple boy, with whom a feeling of admiration was a mere passing fancy—that he was one whom she could whistle off at will.

Jerome, however, she now understood, was no boy, He had already reminded her that he was three-and-

twenty—only a few months younger than herself. He had told her that she had been the idol of his heart ever since he had been of an age to contrast the homeliness of others of his circle of acquaintance with the beauty, grace, and charm of which she was the embodiment; and she could not disguise from herself that under the influence of some sentiment of gratified vanity, or else when she had some point to gain, she had both permitted and promised that which might well be understood as a reciprocation of the feeling she had inspired.

That she had inveigled and, to express it in plain terms, *bewitched* Jerome, she now found to her cost; and how was it to end? She hardly dared to contemplate.

The important point, she saw, was, in the first place, to secure herself, for the present, against any more tête-à-têtes with him. She would retain her hold on him just sufficiently to make him of avail when the time should come for Tshah-nee-kah to signify his readiness to act his part in the drama; but she would take care to give the young man no opportunity of presuming on past condescension. She would be more in her sister's society than heretofore. With Madeleine by her side, Jerome would be restricted to commonplaces, and perhaps for want of fuel the flame which threatened such mischief would burn itself out. She regretted, now, that she had so promptly and positively declined an invitation from the wife of the commanding officer, to dine with her on the day of the payment. Constant engagements in visiting, and communication with Jerome only in writing, must now be her policy.

She must of necessity be at the payment; it was a point that did not admit of question, as she would have need of all the money that would fall to her share. Her father had given her a gentle hint that he should prefer

her name should not figure upon the pay-rolls; but on her objecting that her mother's friends would regard its withdrawal as a signal mark of contempt, he had urged the matter no further.

"I would on no account have stayed away from the payment," she said to herself, "for I shall doubtless see some of Tshah-nee-kah's family there, and perhaps be made acquainted with his plans. But I could have accompanied my father and Madeleine to visit Mrs. Armstrong, at the garrison, after it was over, and remained there for the evening. Now, after having Jerome by my side the whole forenoon, for he will be there to represent his mother's children, he will probably insist on coming home with me, and, at the very least, I shall be forced to listen, without once daring to frown upon his protestations, his hopes, and his everlasting gratitude. I cannot, and I will not. I will sooner go home with my godmother, Madame Jarrot, and spend a long, tedious afternoon listening to Sophie's insignificant chatter, or the jeremiads of the old people upon the degeneracy of the times, and the excellent fashions of the good old days in La Marriale."

In conformity with the plan she had marked out, Monica joined her father and sister in the library, after tea—a thing by no means customary. She did not find them alone.

The young bourgeois had responded with alacrity to the request of Mr. McGregor that he would act as his secretary in his talk with the Indians. Not that there was really occasion for preserving minutes of proceedings so informal; but the careful master conducted all his affairs with the same degree of system that he exacted from those in his employ; and it was because Logan fell in so naturally with his ideas, that he was becoming more and more an object of esteem and regard.

The young man had a reason of his own for hailing with joy this invitation to the council-room. He hoped it might furnish him with an opportunity of making observations, and perhaps gaining information about the much-dreaded Tshah-nee-kah (he carefully treasured up the name), who was associated in his mind with the mischief that he felt sure Miss McGregor was plotting against her sister.

He listened attentively, and transcribed carefully all that fell from the lips of the interpreter. There was nothing, however, to throw light upon the subject nearest his heart.

The invariable "he says, says he," would be followed by professions of peaceful intentions, a repudiation of the action of their misguided friends in the Gagnier matter, and a defining of their own position as obedient and dutiful children of their Great Father, the President.

"And yet there must be a serpent somewhere," Logan said to himself. "Moa-way would not, immediately after the interview between Miss McGregor and some of the members of her tribe at the Barribault, have cautioned me to 'beware of those who did not love the little one,' unless he had good grounds for believing that danger menaced her. Nor would Miss McGregor have been making assignations with this person, *the Autumn*, whom she supposed to be at the Barribault, unless there was some mischievous complicity between them."

He meditated writing a note to Madeleine, warning her to keep in memory his oft-repeated injunctions, and he had in his mind selected Ewing as the bearer of the note, when relief came to his anxiety, in the shape of a request from Mr. McGregor that he would send to his house certain books and papers which he wished to examine at his leisure, and, if it would not be too much trouble, that he would spend a part of the evening in going over them and explaining them to him. The ready compliance of the bourgeois

awakened some such thought as this in the breast of his chief:—

"I am really infinitely obliged to Patterson for sending this young fellow to me! How different is his cheerful assent from what would have been the air of another clerk on being called to give up an evening's enjoyment to help me with these dry business details! Logan is to be depended on in every point of view."

CHAPTER LXV.

THE presence of the elder sister in the library did not add to the satisfaction of the young bourgeois.

He knew that her eyes were watchful even when she seemed most absorbed in her work. It was only now and then that he could venture a glance at the object of his love and solicitude, as she flitted about in her unsuspecting innocence, now suggesting something for her father's comfort —now offering some little service to her sister, whose unwonted visit seemed to entitle her to all the rites of hospitality.

Logan had written the note, as he proposed, and in it he had besought her at no time to leave home, not even for the shortest possible walk, without an escort who could, if need were, prove also a defender. He feared that it might alarm her; but this he must venture, the danger that beset her seeming to him now so imminent.

He was turning in his mind, as the office business which had brought him drew towards a close, various schemes for passing his note to her undetected. An opportunity was unexpectedly afforded him by the entrance of a

métive servant with a whispered message to Miss McGregor.

The young lady's look of vexation did not escape him as she gathered up her working-materials and, thrusting them into her basket of embroidered bark, followed Cateesh from the apartment. That she had gone to receive an unwelcome visitor Logan did not doubt; but he was greatly puzzled when he recognized through the door, which Monica had purposely left open, the voice which was tenderly addressing her.

"Jerome Tremblay! and she to receive the announcement with such a look!" he said to himself. "Why, I thought they were sworn friends—almost lovers. Indeed, I have at times feared there might be a complicity of some sort between them. What can it mean?"

He could not overhear what the tone of the young man's reception was, for Mr. McGregor was prompt with the request,—

"Mallie, dear, will you be so good as to close the door? These chilly evenings admonish us to be prudent."

And Madeleine disappointed her sister also by shutting the door upon her.

Jerome was standing when Monica entered. She found her hand eagerly seized, while he poured forth the most anxious inquiries about her headache of the morning, mingled with assurances of his wretchedness at the thought of her suffering, and ending with the carrying of her hand to his lips with the most passionate fervor.

Extricating herself with little ceremony, Miss McGregor rang the bell and ordered another candle, in spite of the whispered remonstrance;—

"Not for me. I prefer less light, for my part."

And when the little maiden had quitted the room, she had great difficulty to prevent Jerome from embracing her

in his ecstasy at learning that her headache had left her, and that she was perfectly free from any feeling of indisposition.

"Now," said Monica, drawing a little table towards her and seating herself in the most matter-of-fact manner, "during the few minutes I have to spare from my father, let us discourse seriously, Jerome, about the present aspect of affairs. You will, of course, excuse me if I go on with my work when I tell you that it is for a young lady, and that I am anxious to complete it as soon as possible."

"All your wishes are commands to me, as you very well know, my beloved; but is it necessary for the sake of others to put ourselves, our feelings, and our happiness so entirely aside that we may not make the most of these few precious moments? The occasions granted to us are so rare!"

"Ah! my friend," said Monica, in her softest, sweetest accents, "are not all our moments happy, compared with those of our relatives, whose wretchedness we have bound ourselves to ameliorate? Can we, sitting here side by side, free, surrounded by every comfort, refuse to give our first thoughts to the sacred duty we owe them? Can we not be contented to wait yet *a little while,* before making our own happiness the subject of consideration?"

Wee-kau was the cousin of Jerome's mother, as Miss McGregor well knew; her appeal to his natural sensibility did not, however, awake an answering chord.

"But, Monique, my angel," he remonstrated, "I have not your grandeur of soul. I cannot put myself behind others. I must talk of my love for you a little—just a few words. I know it is selfish, but I love to be selfish where you are in question——"

"What I was going to say," interrupted Monica, who saw that she must put a stop to the turn the conversation was taking, "is this—that if you could contrive to see

L'Oiseau Rouge in his prison, he might make some suggestion that would be of service in the furtherance of our object. Think what joy to him to know that he has friends laboring for him! You will make the effort to obtain an interview, will you not, Jerome? That is," she added, in those soft, persuasive accents that were so sure to intoxicate him, "if you think it a good idea. If not—if you have anything better to propose, let me hear it. There is no doubt that Tshah-nee-kah will send us a message as soon as all is quiet and the people of the Prairie thrown off their guard. Now that we reflect upon it, we can easily understand that the old chief could not have shown himself at the payment. Madame Gagnier might have recognized him and denounced him before both citizens and military. He has his own way of co-operating with us, you may depend. With you to rely on, Jerome, I feel that we cannot ultimately fail."

"But, Monique," said Jerome, somewhat sobered by her persistent avoidance of the topic he so longed to engage her upon, "have you ever thought what will happen if we do finally fail?—if, by any chance, what you have undertaken should become known?"

She raised her eyes searchingly to his face. Did he intend this as a menace?

"Yes," she replied, quietly, "I have counted all the chances as well as all the cost. If we succeed, why, of course, all that is to follow is well understood. If, on the contrary, circumstances of *whatever* nature defeat the hopes I have so much at heart—if my relative perishes on the scaffold," she shuddered in spite of herself, "or if my efforts in his behalf become known,—for, of course, I understand that being known they will be reprobated by all who hate our race,—then, happily, I have a resource. It is a blessed thing that in our Church there is a refuge

where all who are disgusted with the treachery of their fellows, or the heartlessness of a cold, unsympathizing world, may bury themselves forever,—where even their very name may be blotted out and forgotten."

The young man turned pale.

"You would never take the veil, Monique?" he said.

"Most assuredly I should, in the event of a disappointment such as you suggest."

"You cannot love me if you can calmly contemplate such a step."

"Did no one who loved ever seek refuge in a convent?" she asked, evasively. "Occasions may arise when there is nothing left but to crush out all earthly affections and become the bride of Heaven."

Jerome was not eloquent except when under the influence of passion. He was quite awe-struck at the image his beloved had conjured up. He had nothing to oppose to the fine sentiments she expressed, save assurances that, as far as matters depended on him, she should not suffer the faintest shadow of disappointment. He undertook without further hesitation to see the jailer, and obtain, at whatever cost, an interview with L'Oiseau Rouge, which, if productive of no other effect, would at least sustain the hopes and cheerfulness of the captives until the appointed hour for their ransom. Monica remembered to speak of them in the plural number, although she could not disguise from herself that the fate of Wee-kau was a matter of perfect indifference to her.

There was the sound of a movement in the next room, and of voices, as if the bourgeois were about taking leave.

A few words between the father and daughter furnished Logan and the young lady herself food for after-thought.

"Papa," Madeleine had said, "I promised Mrs. Arm-

strong that, if you approved, I would spend the day with her to-morrow at the garrison; but I had quite forgotten that it was the day of the payment."

"Well, what of that, my daughter? What has that to do with the question of your going?"

"I supposed I might perhaps have to go to the payment —that was all."

"And why should you have to go, my dear?" asked her father, gravely.

"I do not know, sir," said Madeleine, with heightened color and a little hesitation—"only—my sister always goes, she says."

"Monica can do as she pleases. If she consulted my ideas of what is best, she would stay away. As for you, my child, *you* have nothing whatever to do with the annuities. Go to Mrs. Armstrong's, as you have promised, and I will meet you there at dinner."

Madeleine glanced at Logan, to see if he understood her father's words as she did. His smile was very bright,—in that there was nothing unusual; but she thought there was a gleam of satisfaction in his eye that she interpreted in accordance with the significance she gave to her father's remarks.

CHAPTER LXVI.

THE Fort Crawford of that day was an assemblage of rickety wooden buildings inclosed in a dilapidated wall of pickets, and standing on the banks of the Mississippi at some little distance from the Fur Company's establishment.

Around the latter, and under the protection of the guns

of the Fort, had naturally clustered the homes of the settlers, who were few in number and simple and primitive in their customs; the latter not having yet become greatly modified, either by intercourse with the more stylish inhabitants of the garrison, or by the fermenting influence of Yankee enterprise, which, in the course of time, helped to change, and finally almost to banish, the usages which had descended from generation to generation since the days of the first voyageurs.

Mr. McGregor's residence was still beyond the Fort, as one ascended the river; it was not, however, more than a pleasant walk from the settlement, with the little stockade half-way between the two.

Finding, after breakfast, that Monica persisted in her resolution of attending the payment, her father requested her to be ready at an early hour to accompany him in the calèche in which he was to drive himself to the appointed spot,—a large open space in front of the building in which the chiefs had held their talk with Nar-zee-kah* on the previous day.

Monica received this intimation with peculiar satisfaction; for Jerome, who, as well as the other clerks, was excused from duty for the day, had come dressed in his best, to offer himself as her escort to the ground.

It did not escape the young métif that the greeting of his lady-love was greatly in contrast to his own fervent one; and, as he watched her closely, he could not be deceived as to the alacrity with which she responded to her father's invitation.

"What does it mean?" he said, pondering. "Have I offended her? If what she has so often assured me of is true, she cannot be annoyed at my seizing every opportunity to show her my love; and yet she seems to be

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* The yellow-haired—Mr. McGregor.

almost vexed. Can it be that she expected me to go so early this morning to the jail, to bring her word about L'Oiseau Rouge? Why should his feelings and peace of mind be of so much more consequence to her than mine?"

Miss McGregor's thoughts being somewhat preoccupied, she did not observe the darkening of Jerome's countenance as he revolved these questions in his mind. An idea had occurred to her, which found shape in the sudden inquiry,—

"Papa, is there any one to walk with my sister to the Fort? I suppose Baptiste and Cateesh are both making ready for the payment, and will not like to be delayed in getting to their right places. Yet it will not do to have Madeleine enter the Fort alone. I dare say Jerome will escort her; won't you, Jerome? It cannot detain you more than a few minutes, and it is hardly probable the Agent will begin the payment for an hour yet."

Jerome had been on the point of taking his leave, that he might hasten to the ground and make ready a sheltered, comfortable seat to which he could conduct Monica on her arrival.

Feeling certain that her father would not venture to remain for a great length of time in the open air, warm and summer-like though the day proved to be, he had been saying, mentally, "After a time I shall have her all to myself, and I will know what I am to understand by all this!"

But Jerome had the true French politeness, and when Mr. McGregor, concurring in his daughter's suggestion, addressed him with, "If you would be so very kind, Jerome," he was profuse in his assurances of "the pleasure and the honor he should feel in being permitted to be of service to his daughter."

So Jerome sat down to wait, for Madeleine was not

quite ready, and Monica, who was on the watch for the calèche, notified her father the moment it came to the door, and, without a single regretful look, gave Jerome a simple "au revoir," and walked forth with an air as if she did not even expect him to help her into the vehicle.

"Not a smile! not a single tender glance behind backs!" said Jerome, in the bitterness of his heart. "I do not threaten much—me—but it will not be a very safe game for her to play, if she means what all this looks too much like."

Madeleine, fortunately, did not keep him waiting long. She came into the parlor looking so pretty and smiling, and with so many apologies, that Jerome was quite charmed into good humor, and really thought he did not regret putting his own plans and intentions aside for the sake of conducting her safely to the door of the commanding officer's quarters. This accomplished, he walked briskly to the pay-ground, and had the mortification of seeing Miss McGregor nicely installed upon a bench of boards placed across stools and covered with a piece of strouding; all of which had been improvised by other gallantry than his own. Madame Jarrot sat on one side of her, and the bourgeois on the other,—Ewing, with a large number of citizens of both sexes, and such of the officers as were not to assist in the distribution of the silver, being seated or standing near, as convenience or choice dictated; and as Jerome glided in among them and stationed himself close behind Miss McGregor, he said to himself,—

"It may be as well that she should not be aware I am so near. Something may occur to furnish an explanation of her manner to me."

There had been no want of promptness on the part of the Indians in assembling. They were seated upon the

ground in a large semicircle, two or three deep, in front of the pay-table, at which were the Agent, the commanding officer, and two or three of inferior rank, with a couple of clerks.

Before the Agent lay his pay-rolls, and at his right hand were placed one or two boxes of silver coin, while others stood at his feet, ready to replace the first as soon as they should be exhausted.

The Agent was not a man to hurry himself; he did not compromise his dignity by consulting the convenience or the preferences of other people. He was not afraid of taking cold by remaining in the open air himself; if others were, that was their own look-out. A considerable time thus given for conversation was improved by the young bourgeois in questions and comments addressed to his fair companion.

"What a splendid body of men! I see not more than three or four who are even of medium size. I have been mentally comparing them with any assemblage of white men I have ever seen, and the contrast is certainly not in our favor."

Miss McGregor looked pleased. "The present company, for instance, perhaps," she said, looking around at the different groups.

"Yes, that as well as any. Except your father, and Major Armstrong, who is a well-built, powerful man, and —let me see—M. Tremblay is not amiss; then Jerome,—I do not see him just now,—he is a fine, stalwart fellow."

"Jerome! you would not compare *him* with the greater proportion of those young men?"

Her words were low. They were somewhat scornful, and they were perfectly audible to the one who stood listening almost close to her shoulder.

"Certainly," said the bourgeois; "Jerome is a very

well-made young man. He overtops the most of us, and then he is so light and active."

"Well, we will not say anything about inches. I dare say you are right," said Miss McGregor, carelessly. "But did it ever occur to you to compare the two races after they have advanced in years? Take, for instance, Kar-ray-mau-nee, who is now in his eightieth year, and contrast him with M. Olivier, a man in good health and about the average of his class. The one upright, elastic, with a vigor to sustain him through a long day's hunt or march; his voice sonorous, his intellect clear and powerful. The other, tottering, feeble in his gait, with a 'piping treble' in his voice, his proper sphere the arm-chair in the chimney-corner. And Kar-ray-mau-nee is not a solitary instance. There are Day-kau-ray, and Black Wolf, and Ma-zhee-gaw-gaw, and White Ox, elderly men,—I dare say they all walked every foot of the way from their villages to this place."

"Well," said Logan, smiling, "if we must yield the palm in physical advantages, we may, I suppose, at least pride ourselves on a degree of intellectual superiority."

"I do not perceive it," said Miss McGregor, quietly.

"Are you serious? Do you not consider that we rank higher, if not in the scale of natural endowment, at least in that of mental cultivation?"

"That depends upon what you call cultivation. The sons of the forest have not acquired the arts of civilized life, as they are termed. They prefer to live in the immediate enjoyment of the works and gifts of the Great Creator, and in communion with him through them. What are the books formed by man's device, compared with the book of Nature, which is the study of the red man's life? It is recorded in commendation of the wise King Solomon, that he knew every plant, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop upon the wall; but it nowhere says that for

every one he had a legend, a parable, an illustration more fanciful and poetic, and at the same time more instructive, than either the sacred or profane classics can furnish. You cannot point to the most insignificant production of the animal, vegetable, or mineral kingdom about which an Indian could not tell you more than was ever dreamed of in your philosophy."

"I am not inclined to argue the point with you, even were I capable of matching your eloquence and enthusiasm," said the bourgeois. "And just now, I believe, we are to have other matters to attend to. See, the Agent has spread out his pay-rolls, and is making ready to begin."

He was right; for at this moment the name of the farthest band was called, in loud, pompous tones,—"Four Legs' Village;" and as each head of a family heard himself named, he approached the pay-table and laid before the Agent the little bundle of sticks which denoted the number of inmates within his lodge. The silver was then drawn from the box by one of the assistants, each man receiving the number of half- or quarter-dollars to which his whole domestic circle was entitled.

Logan's interest was intense as he watched band after band receive its quota and retire to make room for its successor. He almost started as he heard at length the call, "Tay-tsho-bee-rah!"* and he looked scrutinizingly at the group who came forward and stood in respectful, patient dignity, awaiting each the sound of his own name.

"TSHAH-NEE-KAH!" was the first on the list.

A handsome young man, with a lithe form and graceful, springing step, came forward and laid down his tally.

"That surely is not the chief?" said the bourgeois to his companion.

* The Four Lakes.

"No—a son-in-law, probably," was the reply.

"And why not a son?" inquired the young man.

"Because a son of that age would be married, and have gone to his wife's family."

"Ah! then it is the fashion of the young ladies to *marry on*, instead of 'marrying off,' as with us!" said Logan, much amused, but still keeping his eye fixed on the representative of Tshah-nee-kah.

Miss McGregor made no reply—she too seemed entirely absorbed. Nobody but Jerome, who was in a position to watch every variation of her countenance, divined that she was endeavoring to catch the eye of the brother-in-law of Wau-nig-ŝootsh-kah. Jealousy had preternaturally sharpened the perceptions of the lover, and his suspicions were beginning to take the direction of the incarcerated young chief.

"Madame Jarrot," Monica presently asked of her neighbor, "can you tell me the name of the young man who received the silver for Tshah-nee-kah's lodge?"

"No; I do not know him, my child. I know L'Oiseau Rouge—and you, my poor dear, know him only too well. Ah! it was your cross, my poor petite," said the old lady, in an accent of tender commiseration, "and how like an angel you bore it!"

'Please, not another word, my dear godmother," said Monica, in a low, agitated tone. "If I could only find out the name of that young man! Will one of your sons be at home this noon? If so, he will do a little errand for me."

"Monique, are you coming to see the games this afternoon?" said a voice close to her ear. She started.

"I don't know, Jerome. I think not; we shall all be so tired. Yet, on the whole, I think I will. There, have they not got through with the villagers? If so, it will

next be our turn. *Ma marraine*, when they call you, take my arm, and Jerome," turning to him with one of her beaming smiles, "will attend us, I know."

"Certainly," said Jerome; but he added not another word. Her smile had no blandishment for him now: had she not spoken disparagingly of his personal appearance? "I could not have done so by her," said the poor fellow. "It is evident that it is no pleasure to her to hear me praised. Besides, she wanted to get rid of me this morning—I do not forget that."

CHAPTER LXVII.

THE hours had glided away very pleasantly with Madeleine and Mrs. Armstrong, each summoning all her powers to amuse and entertain the other, when, just as the animating strains of "Roast Beef" were sounding across the parade, a succession of shrill whoops was heard from below the Fort.

Both ladies threw down their embroidery and sprang to the window which looked out upon the river.

"Oh! the troops from Fort Howard!" they exclaimed, as boat after boat, some filled with soldiers and officers, others containing ladies and children, turned in at a little quay which jutted forth from the bank on which the stockade was placed.

"Ah!" said Madeleine, clasping her hands in delight, "now you will see my friend whom I have been describing to you. I am sure you will like her, as well as admire her."

"But, dear me!" sighed Mrs. Armstrong, "how unfortunate that the quartermaster should be away at the pay-

ment! What will these poor ladies and children do for some place to put their heads in? I know the colonel did not expect them for several days yet. I heard him tell the doctor so. I wish I knew whether I ought to ask them to come in here till they can have quarters assigned them. I wonder if the colonel would approve!"

Madeleine thought the invitation a good idea. "It would seem to look rather inhospitable," she said, "to leave them any longer than was necessary in the little cramped boats, after such a long voyage."

A note was accordingly dispatched by her kind-hearted little hostess, offering the accommodation of her own quarters for the time being.

There was no hesitation and but little delay on the part of the newly-arrived ladies, most of whom soon made their appearance in the quarters of the commanding officer. Very joyous and demonstrative was the meeting between the two young friends. Mrs. Holcomb was, however, the most voluble of the party.

"What do you think?" she cried, "Mrs. Lovel has stolen my cousin away from me! she has, positively. I don't know what papa will say to it, for you know Grace came out here on purpose to bear me company. However, since we are, as I have found out already, to be cut down to one room apiece in this crowded, shabby little place, I suppose her being with me would not have been particularly comfortable for any of the parties concerned. I tell Grace that if ever she is so unfortunate as to marry into the army she must look out for somebody high up on the list; never mind if he is a little old or so; and then she will have her pick of quarters, and crowd other people out as much as she pleases. Do you know," in an audible whisper, "that Hamilton was getting quite particular before we left? If we had not been hurried off so, I do think

he would have popped the question. How very confined the quarters here seem to be, ma'am!" to Mrs. Armstrong. "It is fortunate that you are entitled to choose comfortable apartments, and so many of them!" Here she looked around with a critical and longing eye. "But," with a little laugh, "we poor subs know better than to complain; we understand what we are entitled to, or, rather, what we are *not* entitled to."

Some refreshments were presently brought in, and Mrs. Armstrong remarked, for the information of her guests,—

"I think the gentlemen will not be back before two o'clock. They tell me it requires several hours to make the payment, and the military are obliged to be present. I have no doubt they will hurry all in their power, for the Indians are to have their games this afternoon, according to their usual custom."

"Oh, delightful!" cried Mrs. Holcomb. "I do long to see something of the kind! I am so unlucky, I never happen to get sight of anything amusing. I was quite determined to go up to the Butte des Morts treaty in the summer, on purpose to see all their pow-wows and strange performances, but, somehow, I did not carry my point. Dear me! how unfortunate that the quartermaster is away! After such a journey one naturally feels as if they wanted a place to put their heads in, and get their trunks unpacked, so that they can make themselves a little presentable. I'm sure I'm not fit to be seen! What with those children of Mrs. Bond's" (in a half whisper), "I am sure my travelling-dress is wadded and faced with bread-and-butter. Of course all the ladies will go to see the games. It will not be necessary, I suppose, to make a very elaborate toilet for the occasion."

"Oh, by no means," said Madeleine.

Mrs. Armstrong endeavored, as soon as there was an

interval in this chatter, to make some inquiries of Mrs. Lovel and Mrs. Bond in regard to their journey; but Mrs. Holcomb soon broke in with a different subject:—

"By-the-by, Miss Madeleine, do you see much of Mr. Ewing? I think he was rather a favorite with somebody," glancing at her cousin. "What is he doing here? And what sort of position does he occupy? I thought him rather a nice young man, though I don't remember that he was ever very attentive to me."

Madeleine had detected the mounting color on her friend's cheek at Mrs. Holcomb's first question, and she was conscious that her own complexion changed as the lady rattled on:—

"And that fine-looking fellow that they called the bourgeois—what became of him? Do you know I think Hamilton and Gaylord were both envious or jealous of him? Captain Lovel did so like to plague them by talking of his good looks. Not that I think he had a very handsome face—it was too sun-burnt. Why, one day, I remember, when he came down to the Fort to see the colonel about something or other, he looked as if his nose had been all peeled. However, I don't suppose that was of much consequence for a person in his situation."

"I do not imagine," said Miss Latimer, "that gentlemen care particularly for such trifles as a fair, smooth complexion."

"Don't believe *that*," was the prompt reply. "I don't know how you can pretend to, when you have seen how my lord and master fidgets and colognes his face and inspects himself in the glass if he spies so much as the weeest little pimple or spot. I often hold that as a rod over him when I want to keep him—well, from doing like too many of his brother officers. 'Take care, sir,' I say; 'these things don't make an Adonis of a man!' Oh, fine looks

are as important to their sex as to ours, and that they very soon find out. I often say to Holcomb, 'Look what they have done for you!'" with an affected laugh; "and he is too wise to gainsay facts."

Mrs. Holcomb, bent on improving the opportunity which she flattered herself might lead to an intimacy with the wife of the commanding officer, declined the civilities which were ere long tendered to her by the surgeon's lady, and, with Mrs. Lovel and Grace, accepted an invitation to dine with Mrs. Armstrong.

Madeleine was surprised to see how quickly she, by dint of adroit compliments and ingratiating remarks, evidently won upon their unsophisticated little hostess, who, after the arrival of the gentlemen to look up their feminine belongings and carry them off to inspect the quarters assigned them, remarked with animation to her young friend,—

"What a very agreeable, chatty person Mrs. Holcomb is! So much more attractive than her cousin. I think I shall like her very much. I hope the colonel will take to her, and see no objection to our being a great deal together. To be sure, as a general rule, he rather prefers silent ladies. Ah! you need not smile; I do not talk much before him. It is only when he is absent that the stopper seems to be taken off my tongue. If only Mrs. Holcomb will not give way to her flow of spirits until after my husband has, as we may say, received his first impression!"

And, indeed, there was no danger of the lady in question giving way to a flow of spirits. She did not again make her appearance in Mrs. Armstrong's parlor until summoned to dinner, after the return of the gentlemen from the payment.

The grave, almost gloomy looks of both herself and

her husband showed that matters had not gone well with either. The lady's countenance lighted up a little on observing that they were to dine in the same apartment in which they had been at first received.

"It's a wonder the colonel has not taken away somebody's bedroom to furnish himself a dining-room!" she muttered to herself. "Such meanness! Helping himself to such comfortable quarters, and cutting us down to one room! Well, I sha'n't put a curtain across mine, I'm determined. I shall just have my bed right there, exposed to full view; and if that does not make people ashamed, I don't know what will. Oh, how I shall miss that good, obliging 'old stiffy,' Hamilton, after all!"

Such were her thoughts; and under their influence she for the first quarter of an hour remained silent enough to suit even Colonel Armstrong's fastidious taste. After a time there came a change. The colonel had brought Mr. Gaylord along with the other gentlemen to dine, and that young officer, being in his usual happy flow of spirits, soon started a topic of interest.

"I suppose you ladies will all go to see the games this afternoon?"

The remark was addressed to Madeleine.

"I do not know; it will be as papa pleases," she said, hesitatingly.

"To see the games! Oh, by all means we must go!" cried Mrs. Holcomb. "I would not miss them for the world. What games do they play?"

"Their great game of La Crosse, I am told; and they will have their Pipe Dance, and their Danse de Découverte, as usual"

"And their horse-fights," added Captain Lovel, slily.

"I do not think, Madeleine, you would care to witness a horse-fight," said her father.

"No; I should not like to see a fight of any kind; but for the rest——"

"Not like a horse-fight!" exclaimed Mrs. Holcomb; "why, that would be the greatest attraction of all, to me. I adore horses. I always go to a circus whenever I can. I suppose these fights are very much like the performances one sees at an amphitheatre,—something like the tournaments we read about in novels, aren't they?"

"Not so much as to make them desirable spectacles for ladies to witness," said Mr. McGregor.

"Well, really, I can't see why. There's a difference in tastes. Some ladies have no fancy for anything of this kind; but it is exactly what would be most attractive to me. If I had happened to have always lived out of the world, and been accustomed to only one style of amusements, I might view the matter differently."

"I suppose we who live out of the world are the people who are most accustomed to this particular style of amusement," said Mr. McGregor, "and I believe those of my own sex make no objections to the exhibition; but for ladies,—delicate, refined ladies——"

"Well, at any rate, we can go and see the games and the dances, and those who please can come away when the fighting begins. I dare say the men will all stay, even if it leaves the ladies to come home by themselves," said Mrs. Holcomb, touchily.

"By a little management I think we can arrange that the ladies shall be properly notified," said Mr. McGregor, not heeding the latter part of the lady's speech. "I will send one of my clerks to the principal chief, with a request that I know will be attended to."

Mrs. Holcomb pouted, but said nothing.

"And, Mallie," said her father, lowering his voice, "I will ask Logan to call and walk with you to the ground.

I am not able to be out any longer myself; and I should not like to put Captain Lovel to the inconvenience of bringing you away at any moment you might wish to come."

Madeleine bowed her head in dutiful acquiescence.

"Miss Latimer and I will go together," she said. "Had I not better invite her to come and stay a few days with us, papa, till Mrs. Lovel gets settled in her new quarters?"

"If you wish it, certainly. And, Mallie, take care of yourself, my daughter. If it grows cold, ask Logan to send to the magasin for a shawl for each of you. I think I would not remain very long upon the ground, with such a crowd as there is sure to be. I have not the faintest idea where your sister is," added her father, after a short pause. "Monica seems to take the disposition of her time and the direction of her actions entirely into her own hands, of late. I hope it may be for her ultimate happiness; but——"

There was a sigh as Mr. McGregor, leaving his remark unfinished, turned to take leave of his hospitable entertainers and their assembled guests.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

Mr. McGregor did not content himself with sending a message, but drove himself to M. Tremblay's, where he knew Logan would be at dinner, to request him to escort his daughter to witness the games. It seemed quite opportune that Ewing should also have been upon the spot and volunteered his services also to the ladies.

Both the young gentlemen felt that matters could not have been better arranged; and when, after their call at

Mrs. Armstrong's, the whole party sallied forth from the Fort, there were four happy hearts in the company, notwithstanding the disposition manifested, now by Mr. Gaylord, now by little Smithett or some other officer, to break up the quartette.

Arrived at the ground, Madeleine looked about for her sister. "I expected certainly to find her here," she said, in answer to the inquiries of the newly-arrived officers. "She was to dine with her godmother; but I made sure of her being here by this time." Logan too was looking out for Miss McGregor. He had never relaxed his watch upon her, from the moment she arrived at the place of payment in the morning, until she quitted it with Madame Jarrot and her daughter Sophie. He noticed that after having been escorted to the pay-table by Jerome, and the two had received their allotted portion of the silver, they had not returned immediately to their places, but had stood apart for a time, apparently in deep consultation. The earnestness of Monica's manner, the occasional lifting of her finger to add emphasis to her words, and the half-dubious air with which Jerome seemed listening to her, were none of them lost upon him. He knew that she was playing upon the young métif; and, as he had too just an appreciation of her qualities to believe that this was from motives of vanity or coquetry, he felt certain that she was meditating some deep scheme, in which Jerome's aid was indispensable.

He did not fail to observe that their eyes were from time to time directed towards the circle of Winnebagoes, who still kept their seats as at the first, and he felt persuaded that the representative of Tshah-nee-kah was the object of interest there. The looks and bearing of that young man had made such an impression on him that Logan was certain he should recognize him even in a crowd. He had

watched Monica off the ground, before leaving himself, and had seen her go quietly away with Madame Jarrot. To watch still, and, if possible, prevent any communication between the suspicious parties, was now again his business. If it were necessary to "confiscate" Jerome, he knew he had the power to do so. Now that they had returned to the ground, he found it not the easiest thing in the world to carry out his plan of espial in the midst of the throng which, to his vexation, seemed especially attracted to his immediate vicinity. He felt emboldened by it, however, to say to his companion, "Would you have any objection to taking my arm? I think I could in that way protect you more effectually from the people who press round us, as well as save you some fatigue."

And when Madeleine had assented, he whispered, "I am anxious to find where your sister is. If you will give a searching glance to the right, I will look out to the left. In that way we may find her. She must be here before long; for I see the Indians are beginning to come to the centre of the plain, where the stakes are planted."

Heretofore the natives had been grouped in the vicinity of their lodges, which, with few exceptions, stood at some distance across the plain. There were also in that direction a few dwellings of the "habitans," as the long-established families were called. One of these was the residence of Madame Jarrot; and towards it Madeleine bent her gaze from time to time.

At length the Indians were congregated upon the ground on which their great game of La Crosse was to be played, and every eye was bent upon their proceedings with profound interest. This favorite game, though bearing among the French settlers the same name as that given to the game of cricket, does not in the least resemble the latter. It is played in the following manner:—

A space of from one to three miles is marked out, at each end of which is planted a stake for a goal, while another is set in the centre for a starting-point.

If the game is to be played by a single tribe or band, the players choose sides; if, on the contrary, it is to be a trial of skill between rival tribes, an equal number of the best players of each is selected.

Each player is provided with a *crosse*, or *pau-kau-to-way*, which latter is the name of the game among the Chippewas, with whom it is said to have originated.

This crosse is a slender stick, about four feet in length, having at one end a shallow pocket of net-work fastened around a narrow rim of wood. With this the player is to catch the ball when it is thrown, and hurl it forward in the direction of the goal of his own party.

The ball is about two and a half inches in diameter, and is made of deer-skin stuffed with hair, and with frequently a musket-ball in the centre to increase its momentum.

When all is ready, the players take their stations by the starting-post in the centre. The ball is thrown into the air by one who has either been selected or has gained the privilege by lot; and the strife is then who shall catch it in his crosse and send it in the direction of his own goal.

The ball is seldom permitted to fall to the ground. There are "right field," "left field," and "centre field" on the alert. Amid pushing, jostling, and whooping, some happy player seizes it before it reaches the earth, shakes it a moment in triumph in his crosse, and then hurls it perhaps in a direction the reverse of that in which all have just been struggling forward.

The object of each party is to send the ball beyond their own goal in the direction away from the centre stake. That once accomplished, the game is won.

There was a murmur of satisfaction through the crowd as the band of players approached to the music of drum and shee-shee-quay and took their station by the stake in the centre of the field.

Logan's eye was riveted upon one who seemed to walk a little in advance of his own company; and he soon noticed that he carried the ball in one hand, while he held his crosse in the other. It gave him an opportunity of identifying him, as he inquired of an old métif citizen,—

"What is the name of that fine, stalwart young man who is to throw up the ball?"

"That? Let me see—oh, that is To-shun-neek—L'Outre Noir. He is brother-in-law to this poor Oiseau Rouge, who is in the jail yonder."

"To-shun-neek—the Black Otter! I noticed him at the pay-table this morning. Well, I predict that he wins the game."

"Very likely. He looks as if he could play well."

The ball was tossed up, and the game began—engrossing and absorbing the spectators as a regatta, or a horse-race, or a game of base-ball would do at the present day.

Mrs. Holcomb was almost vociferous in her expressions of interest. As the players would at times draw near the spot where she and her party stood, she would clap her hands and exclaim,—

"Here they come! This is the side of that splendid fellow that threw up the ball first. And here it comes still nearer! They'll win—they'll win! Oh, now—I declare it's too bad!—one of those other fellows got it, and has thrown it clear away over to the other side! Mr. Smithett, I am sorry now that I bet with you. If I lose, you won't see me laugh again for a week."

"There is Monica," said Madeleine, in a low tone, to the bourgeois. "I saw her just now come out of that

Indian lodge yonder—and with Jerome Tremblay! What can it mean?"

She was quite pale, and Logan could feel that the hand which rested on his arm trembled.

"You know," he said, in an indifferent tone, "that your sister is very independent. And as for visiting her Indian acquaintance——"

"Oh, I do not mean that. Of course she feels quite at home with them, they are all so attached to her. But Jerome Tremblay—to be walking about so familiarly with him! And he called to see her last evening, and again this morning. What can it mean?"

"Don't make yourself unhappy about it, dearest," whispered the bourgeois. "We may find out that your sister has reasons for what she does. Possibly there was no one at her godmother's to escort her on some visit she may have thought necessary to make——"

"Oh, yes; M. Jarrot would have gone—he is the very flower of courtesy. Or she might have taken Sophie. But—Jerome Tremblay; to be so intimate with him as she seems to be of late!"

If Monica was surprised to find her sister a spectator of the sports, she gave no sign. She came sauntering slowly towards the spot where Madeleine stood, only quickening her pace as if she at this moment for the first time recognized the ladies and gentlemen who formed the group.

Jerome's face was beaming with satisfaction as Monica presented him to the company, naming him as the son of the gentleman whom they all knew—the same who had been protector of herself and sister on their journey home.

"Jerome was so good as to accompany me," she said, carelessly, to her sister, "to one of the lodges where there

is a child who has been lately hurt by the kick of a pony. We were afraid we were going to have work for the surgeon; but I believe the little fellow will do very well now. Where is Madame Jarrot? She left us while we went to fulfil that errand for her, and has walked on here. She must be somewhere on the ground."

Logan did not believe a word of this story; and his skepticism was justified when he presently heard the address of her friend Sophie:—

"Oh, here you are, Monique! Why, where have you and Jerome been hiding yourselves——"

"See, see!" cried Miss McGregor, with animation. "There, the ball is tossed off again! That is Wheen-kah—little Wheen-kah—who is whirling it up. Ah! the 'Little Duck'—he belongs to the other side. I suppose we are all for the side whose goal is nearest to us."

"The side of To-shun-neek," said Logan, quietly. Miss McGregor gave him a sharp glance.

"But, Monique——" persisted Sophie.

"Ah! there they all go once more! And oh, Sophie, apropos of amusements! Now is the time to broach the subject of the Sainte Fériale. What do you think," lowering her voice, "of inviting some of these officers and ladies to join us? Their contributions to the entertainment would be something very gratifying, I will engage; and I think it is a sort of merry-making that will please them well."

"But, Monique, you have not told me——"

"No, I am not able to tell you yet, dear, because your mamma has not yet decided which evening she will take. She is clearly of opinion that the Sainte Fériale should begin on La Toussaint; but whether she will receive first, or wait for le Saint Martin, is yet to be determined. I shall leave you and Jerome to settle the matter, and also to decide whether we shall include the young militaires in our circle

or not. I can assure you that some of them are very gallant and agreeable."

And, watching her opportunity, Miss McGregor introduced Lieutenants Gaylord and Smithett to her friend Sophie, hoping that in the rattle of the former her walk with Jerome might be forgotten.

And Jerome, with whom all things were going smoothly again, on his part, played his cards so well in seconding what he knew to be the wishes and plans of his lady-love, that Mademoiselle Jarrot, in the height of her recovered spirits, had soon engaged the two young officers to promise to grace whichever of the Sainte Fériale balls should be given at the house of her parents.

There had been an immense scuffling and shouting on that part of the ground which lay between the centre-post and the goal nearest the visitors. It seemed as if the party of To-shun-neek were fairly surpassing themselves—that the other side had no chance whatever; and truly that fact was made manifest just at this moment, when a clear, ringing whoop, followed by a succession of the same, and then a clapping of hands and loud hurrahs from the spectators, as they saw the ball come flying past the goal—not far from them—announced that victory had crowned the right party.

"I'll take one pair of pea-green, and one of lavender, thank you, Mr. Smithett," said Mrs. Holcomb, exultantly. "And for the cologne, Mr. Gaylord——"

"Thank you, madam, I never deal in the article," said that young gentleman, turning away unceremoniously; for he did not relish the idea of being drawn in to pay a debt he had never dreamed of making.

The lady affected to laugh; then, in spite of her cousin's frowns and "Oh, Ediths!" she exclaimed, in no murmured tone, "Mean creature!"

"I think," said Captain Lovel, "I have seen a different game of ball from this—one played by the fair sex only—with a couple of balls attached by a cord. I remember the dark-complexioned ladies at St. Anthony used to play it with great animation. Rather in the goddess-Diana style, however—short skirts, and so forth—not a good game for a windy day,—ha! ha! ha! I don't know that I ever saw ladies mind tumbling about so little as they seemed to."

"Ah! there comes Major Tremblay on his patrol!" exclaimed Ewing. "How is it, Jerome, that you are not with your company?"

"I had to get excused to go to the pay-table this morning," said the young man.

"Yes; but this afternoon. Why are you not doing your part at guarding us? Olivier is in the ranks, and young Jarrot."

"I happen, unfortunately, to be a little lame this afternoon," said Jerome, somewhat disconcerted.

"It is a good thing that you don't happen to limp, though," said Ewing, mischievously, while Jerome turned away, and, taking Sophie Jarrot under his arm, walked with her to look at a company playing the game of "*moccasin*" in another part of the field.

CHAPTER LXIX.

THE "Sainte Fériale" or "Holiday" balls were a time-honored institution among the simple habitans of the old frontier towns, and their descendants in the Far West. It is a pity that their observance has gone out of fashion with, we had almost said, all the primitive, homely graces in their train.

The entertainments were given in turn by the different families of the Canadian or French settlers, on each of the principal fête-days from All Saints to Shrove-Tuesday, or, as they would say, from La Toussaint to Mardi-gras.

In one feature—that which took from the entertainment its formality and gave a community of interest to the "assistants"—they were like our modern picnics, except that it was the gentlemen who contributed each his quota to the sinews of enjoyment, not in the form of subscription, but of a proportion of the veritable material—one sending coffee, another sugar, a third candles—others the violins, game, buffalo-tongues. If a guest came late and without premeditation, he brought in his pocket his package of tea, or some other offering. Nobody came empty-handed. The cakes and the "quelque-choses" (not ice-cream and oysters, which were unknown in those days) fell to the lot of the giver of the feast; and probably there never were parties that furnished a greater amount of innocent and hearty enjoyment than the Sainte Fériale balls of the remote frontier settlements.

It was the first one of the approaching series that was now under discussion by the parties most interested in its success and in its possible consequences.

Monica and Sophie had long been confidential friends; confidential, that is, on the part of Sophie, who was of an open, confiding temper, and who had ever been pleased and flattered by the appearance of interest manifested in her affairs by one whom she admired and looked up to beyond all others of her acquaintance.

Sophie's mother, besides being the godmother of Monica, had been the cherished friend of Madame l'Espagnole; and little particulars which she had occasionally let fall of the history of mother and daughter had invested both with a sort of romance in the imagination of the susceptible

young métive. Sophie knew all about the episode of Waunig-sootsh-kah, although her friend had, to her, never mentioned his name. Not even now, when he lay a captive in his dungeon, did Monica ever voluntarily allude to his position or his prospects. Miss McGregor, in turn, knew all about Sophie's *affaires du cœur*. Although there was so little reciprocation on her part, there was such a charm in her way of listening to the outpourings of her friend's little tender experiences, the manner was so gentle and insinuating with which she would draw from its secret place every particular which she cared to learn, that she was regarded by the transparent and unsuspecting Sophie as the very embodiment of affectionate, trustworthy fidelity.

Never until to-day had a suspicion crossed the honest heart of Sophie that Monica could be other than she appeared; but her growing affection for Jerome had wonderfully sharpened her mental vision.

It may have been true, as Jerome averred, that from his boyhood Miss McGregor had been to him the embodiment of all that was loveliest and best; but it was equally true that he had never heretofore aspired to any return of a sentiment which had only lately taken the proportions of a passion. He had worshipped her afar off, as some bright particular star. What his step-mother had pettishly said about his "suffering her to make a fool of him" had relation simply to his folly in gazing after her at every chance, and neglecting his work or his sports for the sake of encountering her in her walks or visits.

The good lady had, of late, fancied her step-son cured of his nonsense. During several preceding months, circumstances had thrown him into rather intimate association with Sophie Jarrot. Frequent hunting and fishing excursions with her two brothers in the midsummer holidays,

and repeated little entertainments at one house or the other, contrived by the elders of the two families, brought them a good deal together; and, as Sophie was perfectly frank in her nature, and but little trammelled by "les usages du monde," which, truth to tell, held slight sway in the little Arcadia in which her lot was cast, it was not difficult for even an indifferent observer to divine the impression her constant attendant had made on the young girl's heart. It was not in Jerome's vain and impressionable nature to fail to respond in a measure to the sentiment he had inspired. He was flattered by the young girl's evident partiality; and as, during the long absence of the chief object of his admiration, he saw no one to compare Sophie unfavorably with, he had fancied he liked her a good deal, and from time to time had told her so, though without binding himself by any promises for the future, or exacting any such from her.

Sophie had imparted to her friend, at the earliest moment possible after her return, her hopes, her expectations, nay, her certainty, of being one day the wife of Jerome; and a rehearsal of all the little particulars of what she termed their courtship, with an unreserved exhibition of the innermost sentiments of her heart, formed the staple of her frequent confidential communications. Monica listened to it all, and mentally took Jerome's measure by the gauge the unsuspecting Sophie thus furnished, until she decided that he was exactly the tool she wanted to aid her in the accomplishment of her plans.

Her treachery to Sophie was scarcely less than her treachery to Jerome; yet she persuaded herself that the stake for which she was playing justified the sacrifice of all considerations of what two so insignificant were to suffer. "After a while they can marry and console each other," she would say to herself. "If Jerome took pleasure in

making love to her while I was away, he has but to resume the amusement. They are just fitted for each other; only it must be when I have no further occasion for his services." As in the present position of affairs it was important that she should avoid awakening the jealousy of Sophie, Monica left Jerome to her for the remainder of the afternoon, taking care, in order to smooth away any misunderstanding that might possibly arise, to whisper to Madame Jarrot,—

"Ma marraine, you know that I had a little matter to speak about with the wife of To-shun-neek,—a word of encouragement to send to that poor Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, in whose behalf my father is laboring with the Government. I have made Sophie believe that my errand was to see after a child that had been hurt. You will be so amiable as not to contradict my story, will you not? As people are feeling now towards L'Oiseau Rouge, it is better that his name should be spoken as little as possible."

"Ah, certainly, my poor child; Sophie shall know nothing. It is so forgiving in you to be working for L'Oiseau Rouge when he went and married another! Alas! what are men, I pray you, when we talk of constancy?"

Monica had made matters all right with Jerome. He had not concealed from her his wounded feeling at her depreciating remarks in the morning.

"What would you have, my friend?" she asked, in well-feigned astonishment. "Would you have liked to hear my name and my words quoted before all the boarders at your father's table, and to be yourself rallied as the object of my admiration? I had not expected that, Jerome. I had supposed my delicacy would be as precious to you as to myself,—nay, more so; for a woman may, and does, forget herself, but a man of honor and of feeling—a true knight—never!"

And, as she talked, poor Jerome wondered at his own blind selfishness, and almost believed himself too great a brute ever to be forgiven.

"It is rather embarrassing," said Monica, veering, as the sailors say, upon another tack, "that you have got yourself, apparently, a little entangled with Sophie. I don't speak this as complaining, you will observe. I know that these things are often the result of circumstances beyond our control. I should no more think of questioning your good faith to me, as a matter of actual fact, if put to the test——"

"Try me—only try me—put me to what proof you please," protested the young man. "As for entangled—does Sophie say that I ever——"

"Of course I never ask Sophie a question, and I listen as little as I can. She is fond of talking of what took place while I was away——"

"Nothing, nothing took place, Monique, I assure you by all that is sacred! If Sophie considers a few polite speeches, more or less——"

"Never mind—never mind. Do not excite yourself. I am not the person to expect you to think all women ugly for my sake. If you had found a woman that you really loved better than me, I take it for granted you would have told me so, just as I should have done by you—if such a thing *could* have happened. We owe that perfect frankness to each other. When you say to me, 'Monique, my heart is changed,' when I say to you, 'Go, Jerome, I wish to see you no more,' then we shall know that the dream of our life is over—that we have only to bow our heads and die."

"Oh, Monique! my only beloved! since your tenderness is so exalted, so heavenly, why must it be that we have to hide our sentiments, and that to you I can at no

moment be more than a distant acquaintance? I feel, at times, as if I should die, even though you have not said '*go*' in so many words."

"Shall I tell you, Jerome? It is not altogether that I feel that my father must be managed before he can be brought to consent to our union, though I tell you, candidly, he has had other views for me,—views that I have never concurred in, nor ever shall. But there is this other consideration. You will perceive the peculiarity of my position with the Jarrots. Madame is my godmother—the friend of my departed mother. I have always been good friends with Sophie. She has given me to understand that she has claims upon you——"

"But you can tell her plainly that you know better."

"That is not a point for *me* to settle," said Miss McGregor, with dignity. "You are the proper person to arrange your own attitude; and, if you will take my advice, you will not proceed abruptly in the business. By degrees, and as opportunity offers, you can define your position, and bring matters to a harmonious conclusion. Sophie will be reasonable if she is humored just a little—but take too decided measures, and you will have a terrible hornets'-nest about your ears and mine too."

And thus it was that Miss McGregor contrived to disembarrass herself, for the present, of the assiduities of her lover, though still keeping up with him a relation of intimacy sufficient to answer her purposes should any emergency make his services necessary.

CHAPTER LXX.

It had been settled, before the day of the payment was over, that the Sainte Fériale amusements should begin with a dance at Madame Jarrot's.

The time which must still intervene before La Toussaint* slipped rapidly away to all but Miss McGregor. To her the days seemed interminable; and yet they were not monotonous—they were only too much varied by successive disappointments.

In her visit to the lodge of To-shun-neek, on the afternoon of the payment, she had concerted with the young Winnebago measures for carrying out the abduction she had so long contemplated.

Tshah-nee-kah was to be the controlling spirit; being under the ban, however, he could not act without her aid and counsel.

She had designated the night of the ball at her godmother's as the season which promised best for the accomplishment of the enterprise. She undertook to answer for her sister's being present on the occasion. The dwelling of M. Jarrot standing at a distance from the village and garrison was a point of great advantage. Some of the officers, it is true, might be there, but they would be unarmed; for, of course, they would never think of going to an entertainment like that in full dress. Then her father, whose lameness had declared itself as acute rheumatism, would, doubtless, not be speedily cured. He would be

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* All Saints' Day—the first of November.

unable to accompany them, and would be forced to delegate their charge to M. Tremblay, who had so faithfully attended them through their long, troubled journey of the summer. Monsieur could easily be induced to transfer them to the care of his son; and, once resigned to the escort of Jerome, the business was done. What more easy than for Tshah-nee-kah and his assistants to lie in ambush near the Jarrot mansion until the hour for the departure of the guests? Monica would manage matters so that she and her sister should be the last ones to take leave; then, before they could reach the calèche which was to convey them home, a rush forward could be made by those lying in wait, a blanket be thrown over the head of the captive to stifle her cries, and she be hurried to the spot where other confederates, lurking in attendance, with their hardy little ponies, would bear her away though the passes among the hills, or to a canoe lying in the Wisconsin,—whichever should promise the speediest and surest escape from pursuit.

The presence of Miss Latimer as an inmate of the McGregor household threatened now to defeat this well-laid scheme. Madeleine and Grace were inseparable, and it soon became evident that wherever the latter went, there also Mr. Ewing contrived to be. To add to her trouble, Miss McGregor made the unwelcome discovery that Logan's powers of observation seemed of late to have become preternaturally sharpened.

She had necessarily depended on Jerome to communicate with the messengers occasionally sent by Tshah-nee-kah, and to receive or impart whatever information was to be conveyed on either side. But Jerome complained that the eye of the bourgeois was now ever upon him; that if a Puan woman came to trade it was always Olivier or some of the other clerks who were sent to attend to her, and that Logan himself seemed to have nothing to do but

to saunter about and take account of the movements of all native customers until they were fairly off the premises.

These varied causes of vexation combined to deepen the gloom which heavier trials had thrown over the spirit of Miss McGregor. She became so completely absorbed in her perplexities as to be quite unobservant of a change that had come over her coadjutor, Jerome.

That he was less affectionately demonstrative in the tête-à-tête meetings which it was now and then necessary to hold, she perceived with great satisfaction. It was a decided improvement on the young man's former deportment. She doubted not he was acting on her suggestion that he should wait patiently for his reward until the task set before them should be accomplished; possibly, too, the devotion of Sophie was making him amends for any privation he might at present suffer—Monica hoped so.

She did not notice the fierce gleam in her lover's eye as, with look and voice that she strove to make indifferent, she would ask him, from day to day,—

"Have you been able to see the Red Bird yet, Jerome?"

Nor did she observe how closely he would shut his teeth, and how deep would be his tone, as he replied,—

"Not yet." Neither did she note how he would steal a glance from the corner of his eye as he went on to explain: "The bourgeois must divine what I am about to do. He has always some little job of writing which he says nobody can do so well as I; and it must always, it appears to me, be undertaken at the only hour when I could get leave to enter the jail."

This was not strictly true, but it was the excuse Jerome made for neglecting a commission which he had no heart to execute.

The sighs which Monica could not always suppress, brought no pang to the heart of the young métif—he was

no longer ignorant of the extent of his own wrongs, nor for whose sake they had been inflicted.

"She is being punished now," he would say, without compunction, to himself; "she will be punished worse before she is through with it!" It was in the following manner that the eyes of Jerome had been opened.

On the night succeeding the payment, he had lain awake through the long hours, pondering on the events of the day, recalling every word, every look, of his adored Monique, and striving to reconcile certain things that had forced themselves upon his observation, with the assurances and explanations with which she had endeavored to satisfy him. Away from the fascinating influence of her glance, her voice, her touch, Jerome could compare and judge more sanely.

Had there not been, in the first place, a look almost of repulsion when on the preceding day he was offering her his tenderest sympathy in her disappointment about the coming of Tshah-nee-kah? Had she not on the evening of the same day, when he had gone to her with his heart overflowing with love and solicitude, persisted in keeping him at a distance, made the excuse of finishing a paltry piece of embroidery to justify her in refusing him even the privilege of holding her hand in his clasp? And had not her tone and manner, if not her words, been disparaging in speaking of him at the payment this very morning? Was it a sufficient reason for her doing so that she would not have Madame Tremblay's boarders bandy her name about? Surely there was no danger of that; for Logan himself was praising him, and any lady might have assented to as much as that in his favor. "'A fine, well-made man,' the bourgeois said; and so I am,"—it was thus he communed with himself; "Monique can't deny that. And doesn't she know that pretending not to think so would give Logan

ten times more suspicion than if she had agreed with him? Sophie would have been a great deal bolder: if she had heard any one remarking upon me, and complimenting me, she would not have been afraid to come out with her opinion. What is more, she would have been delighted. But Monique,—oh, Monique! Can it be that she is playing with me for her amusement?"

The poor fellow trembled and tossed; he even rose from his uneasy couch and walked the room, till admonished by the shrill voice of his step-mother,—

"Qui est-ce qui fait tant de tapage là haut?"*

After a night of agitation, the conclusion he came to was, to seek information and counsel from the mother of Sophie. "Madame Jarrot is her godmother," he said; "she must know whether she is capable of deceiving me so heartlessly. I know so little about her character, for she has always held herself above me till lately; but, oh, she did seem so good, so angelic!" And he wept in his passion.

At his first leisure, which was not till the afternoon, Jerome went to Madame Jarrot. He had no scruples of delicacy about taking information. "I will ask her *franc et net*,"† he said, "every question I can think of, till I find out. If Monique has been amusing herself with me, woe betide her! I come of the same blood as herself, as her favorite Wau-nig-sootsh-kah, L'Oiseau Rouge. Ah!" he stopped short in his walk, and pondered, "yes, most of all will I find out about him. I have never suspected her; but now I remember many things. If only he can be released, *my* feelings and *my* happiness are of very little account."

He held up his head, and walked quickly on, occasion-

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* Who is making all that noise up there?

† Outright.

ally clinching his hand and growling, in a manner that quite comported with his boasted lineage,—

"If this is what she wanted of me, after all!"

Madame Jarrot was not at home; but Sophie received him with beaming smiles, and with such demonstrative solicitude for his comfort that the contrast with Monica's cold reserve could not but force itself upon him.

"Come near and take this cosy seat by the fire, Jerome. Isn't it chilly to-day? Only think, the month of October half gone. Only two weeks to La Toussaint! and it's here, with us, that the first ball is to be!"

"I'm not cold, I thank you; I don't care to sit near the fire," said Jerome, who was, in truth, at a fever-heat.

Sophie thought she must continue on the subject of the ball, to cheer him. "Mamma has gone to talk a little with Madame Olivier and Madame Tremblay about it. Monsieur your father can tell her whether it will do to have things just in the same old fashion as usual."

"And why should it not? Who would wish to change?"

"Oh, you know," said Sophie, hesitating,—"I can't say, but—only, as Monique and her sister are coming, and they are not used, perhaps, of late——"

"Monique is coming, then?" said Jerome, with animation, seizing upon this opening.

"Yes, she said she should come. You are surprised, are you not? I could not have done such a thing myself—could you? *I* should have buried myself in my chamber—I could not have gone abroad, even for a visit. And as for dancing, that of all things! The very sound of the violins would have given me a horror!"

"What is it? Why do you say that, Sophie? Why should Monique not dance?"

"Do you ask, Jerome? Would I dance, do you think, when my dearest friend—the man for whom I would once

have given up everything in this world and the next too—lay chained in a dungeon, the very day appointed on which he must be dragged out to die? Oh, I have wondered and wondered that Monique could have the heart even to walk abroad in the sunshine—still less to be taking part in diversions and merry-makings."

Jerome sat as one stunned. His first connected thought was that possibly Sophie, in her voluble assertion of her own tender feelings, had perhaps expressed herself amiss.

"L'Oiseau Rouge, her cousin, you mean! She is attached to him and feels a tender pity for him—I happen to know it—she is trying, that is, she would do anything in her power to effect his release—but staying away from the dance would not help that." Jerome's voice was not quite assured as he went on with this vindication.

"No, it would not help it—it would not set him free. But, I ask you, how can she feel inclined to take part in such festivities, L'Oiseau Rouge being what he ever has been to her, and she to him?"

"Her cousin—her mother's nephew," articulated Jerome, slowly.

"Her cousin! Ah! that is all, is it? Well, I will say no more." And Sophie closed her lips and remained silent.

In vain Jerome plied her with questions.

"Perhaps, after all, I do not know anything about it," she said, provokingly. "Perhaps, not being a very intimate friend, I may have been deceived. Perhaps mamma does not keep as well posted about her god-daughter as a stranger might do."

"But only tell me what it is you mean—what you are trying to make me believe," said Jerome, with difficulty controlling the tremor in his voice, as his suspicions began to take a new and terrible form.

"Me trying!" cried Sophie. "Oh, pardonne,—why

should I? You know, doubtless, so much better than me. You and Monique have been such good friends together lately! Yes; L'Oiseau Rouge is her cousin—let it rest there."

There were tears in Sophie's eyes, though she smiled and endeavored to preserve a tone of raillery.

For a moment Jerome said to himself, "She is jealous—perhaps she would like to have me quarrel with Monique."

But no—Sophie's tone had been too genuine, the expression of her face too honest, to admit such a supposition.

She would tell him nothing, question her as he might. Then he would see Madame Jarrot at once,—this very afternoon, if he could find her.

Full of this resolve, he took his leave.

CHAPTER LXXI.

It was Jerome's fortune to meet Madame Jarrot as she was leaving his father's house, and he offered the old lady his arm, to escort her back to her own home. It was a simple act of courtesy, but it opened her heart towards him, and made the task of getting to the bottom of the subject in hand, all the more easy.

Jerome played the fox; and, beginning with professions of sympathy for Wau-nig-sootsh-kah and "the unhappy Monique," he by degrees drew forth all the particulars of their early history—the attachment which had begun and ripened during the successive visits of mother and daughter to their tribe at the Four Lakes—the hopes that the lovers had for a time entertained of overcoming the objections of

the father—of the mother's influence in separating them when she found, at length, that consent to their union could never be obtained—and the subsequent unhappiness of both.

It was a terrible revelation to the young métif. He had been vexed at seeing his idol so occupied with the enterprise of delivering her relative from bondage and torture, that she would give herself no time for tenderness towards him; but he had set this down to an exaggerated idea of duty and the claims of friendship. He had felt sure that the liberation of the young chief once achieved, and he away to distant friends, Monique would feel free to turn to other subjects, and make amends to herself, no less than to him, for all their previous forbearance. That she would not, ultimately, joyfully be his, was a consummation that he had, for weeks, ceased to dread.

In proportion to the strength of his hopes and the passionate force of his love, was the shock which the narrative of Madame Jarrot brought. Yet even then he did not accept the destruction of his bright visions without a struggle.

"This was long ago," he said, as soon as he was sufficiently master of himself to speak. "She must have been very young at that time."

"Yes, Monique was about fifteen when it first began—not more. L'Oiseau Rouge is older, you know. He was a chief at that time, and so brave! Such a warrior and such a hunter! So noble and so beautiful! Monique was always far beyond her years—she was wonderfully sensible, even at twelve or thirteen."

"But Wau-nig-sootsh-kah was a pagan," objected Jerome. "How could Monique, a good Catholic, wish to marry him?"

"Ah! that is what helped the matter—she expected to

convert him and all our people. Knowing the custom among them, that the husband goes to the wife always, instead of the wife to the husband, she thought that in time L'Oiseau Rouge would give up his wild life and be reconciled to the Church. Madame l'Espagnole, her mother, had great hopes of that. She has told me how Monique would sit on the banks of the beautiful lake for hours, with L'Oiseau Rouge lying at her feet and looking up in her face, while she would tell him stories out of the Bible, and about the wonderful doings of the holy saints. Poor young thing! She would have given her soul for his—but it was of no use. Wau-nig-sootsh-kah liked the stories—our people are all fond of stories, you know—and I think he tried very hard to believe all she told him; but he could not, as he said, make a woman of himself. When it came to forgiving his enemies, instead of scalping and tomahawking them, that was asking a little too much."

"The chiefs generally take that view," said Jerome, with a touch of sarcasm. "It's only the women and children, and the old men who can no longer go on the war-path, that the priests can succeed in baptizing."

"Pardon'," said the old lady, "Madame l'Espagnole had helped to convert some of her cousins on the Upper Mississippi. To be sure, I did hear it rumored, after the troubles of last year, that it looked as if the work would have to be done over again; but that, I suppose, is because she is gone, poor soul! She had great hopes that Monique would succeed with L'Oiseau Rouge, knowing how intelligent she was, and with such a wonderful discretion, just like her mother; and, moreover, she and Wau-nig-sootsh-kah loving to such a degree that they would have died for each other."

"Madame l'Espagnole had a wonderful discretion, eh?" exclaimed Jerome, scornfully. "I don't think it looks

much like it—to be willing that her daughter should put on the blanket and leggings and turn herself into a squaw outright."

Jerome's rage would not permit him to be choice in his expressions.

"Oh, as to the *couverte* and the *mitasses*, you know, Madame l'Espagnole always wore them herself."

"Then probably she would have been pleased, too, to see her beautiful, civilized, Christian daughter packing on her shoulders the meat her husband had killed, or perhaps the mats and kettles of the lodge, and trooping along with the other women of the tribe! And Monique—she was ready, it seems, to embrace such a life!"

"Ah, my friend, what would you have? With a character like Monique's every sentiment is intense to the utmost; there is nothing *médiocre* about it. There is no doubt she would now, after the lapse of so many years, follow him to the world's end, and spend her life with him, if she were not bound by her promises to her mother!"

The young man set his teeth firmly together. It was a minute or two before he remarked, in a low voice,—

"That would be inconvenient for the other wife—two other wives, if I am not misinformed."

"Pardon'—Monique tells me the poor fellow has no wife, now."

"Monique? Then she talks about him still?"

"Oh, to me, who am her *marraine*—of course she has no secrets from me. How could I comfort her in her troubles if she kept them from me?"

"And she has told you that she still loves L'Oiseau Rouge?"

"Pardon'—I did not need to be told that—me. I have my eyes. When she discourses to me of him, can I not see what is in her heart?"

"And what does she think is now to be his fate?" inquired Jerome, anxious to learn whether Miss McGregor had taken any besides himself into her secret counsels.

"She thinks, as we all do, that the Government will pardon him. She says her father will get all the citizens and the officers to sign a petition and send on to the President, and that then he will be released."

By this time Madame had arrived at her own door. She had no idea that she had committed the slightest indiscretion in quietly imparting to her future son-in-law all that she knew respecting Sophie's intimate friend.

Jerome, resisting her urgent invitation to enter and spend the evening with the young people, turned away, and, retracing his steps, strolled along past the warehouses, the village, and the fort, until he reached that part of the bank of the Mississippi which lay between the McGregor mansion and the water.

A small matted lodge stood a little way up the stream, but he did not at once approach it. He continued to pace up and down, under the partial shade of the willow-trees, which were now fast losing their foliage in the autumn breeze.

His head was bowed, and he was meditating bitter things—bitter as regarded his own past and present—more bitter still as concerned Miss McGregor's future.

"I am come of the same blood as her beloved Wau-nig-sootsh-kah—she shall see that!" was the burden of his thoughts. And how most signally to make her sensible of this affinity, was the subject on which he pondered as the moments went by.

When he had come to a full resolve, he ceased his monotonous tread, stepped forward more briskly towards the little wigwam upon the bank, and, pushing aside the mat which hung in place of a door, entered its smoky, unsavory precincts.

CHAPTER LXXII.

A WEEK had passed since the payment, before Jerome advised himself (as he would have expressed it) to visit Wau-nig-sootsh-kah in his cell.

He had been long aware of the profound despondency in which the young chief was plunged, but he had for a time feigned inability to obtain an interview, that he might spare his beloved the sorrow which a faithful description of her friend's sufferings must cause her.

Now all things were changed. Jerome's sense of his own wrongs banished every magnanimous sentiment; he was ready to depict all that met his eye or his ear, without softening a single feature. To the question, as he met Monica by appointment one afternoon, "Have you seen him yet?" he was able to answer,—

"Yes, I have been admitted to his cell to-day."

"And how is he? Is he well? Is he comfortable?" were the eager questions which followed.

"Comfortable? No—a man who has all his life breathed the free air, who has trod his own prairie and forest, roaming at will where he pleased, is not very comfortable lying hand-cuffed and fettered in a dungeon upon a heap of dirty straw. No—not comfortable; far from it!"

"Oh, Jerome, no, no! I did not mean comfortable. But does nobody try to make things tolerable? Is nothing done to lighten the load that the law lays upon him?"

"I suppose they give him plenty of food, and he has his kinnikinnick and tobacco, if he likes them. He looks,

though," (here Jerome stole a glance to watch the effect of his words,) "as if he did not care for such bodily comforts as these. It is not with his outward senses that he suffers, unless the sight of that miserable, filthy Wee-kau is an eye-sore to him."

"Ah, yes, it is his mind. It is the feeling that he is trapped and chained like a wild beast, that is gnawing out his very heart," said Monica, in a tone of anguish. "Did you tell him, Jerome, that I was working for him,—that we were *both* working for him?" she said, correcting herself as she remarked the strange expression on the face of her companion.

"I told him all that you bade me," was the reply.

"And what did he say?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing? Not even that the words conveyed a hope which would cheer and sustain him?"

"He said nothing whatever."

"Jerome, did you use *my* name? Did you entreat him not to despond? Did you tell him that I would—that I was certain of getting him set free before many weeks?"

"I told him that."

"And he made no reply?"

"None."

"Jerome, you wring my heart. Speak more fully. What is it? Is he ill?"

"I could not tell. He lay with his face turned from the little window which lets the light into their cell. From the time that I went in, he neither moved nor spoke to me."

"Did you question Wee-kau? What does he say?"

"He says that L'Oiseau Rouge seldom speaks; that he eats almost nothing; that his life is gone, like the dust which is blown into the air."

"Jerome," said Miss McGregor, lowering her voice involuntarily, "did you inquire if his wife had been to visit him?"

There was deep scorn in the face of the young man as he replied, "No; I don't meddle with such things—me!"

Monica took no notice, but went on:—

"My friend, we *must not* fail. There is life and death hanging on our action. All that we have to do must be accomplished on the night of the dance at Madame Jarrot's. We cannot defer it longer. Wau-nig-sootsh-kah will die of despair, if he is not released soon."

"That is undoubtedly true. But suppose your father should be able to go to the ball, after all?" suggested Jerome. "His lameness is much better than it was a week ago. It may happen that he will accompany you: if so, he will keep his party all together, and his eagle eye will be sure to be upon your sister every moment. Besides, there will be Logan and Ewing, and one does not know how many officers, clustering round you young ladies. A surprise will not be very easy under such circumstances."

"True, too true. My father's going would certainly complicate matters, perhaps defeat our plan altogether. Oh, Jerome, what can we do in such an event? I trust to you to advise me. Whom have I but you to rely upon?" She uttered this in a caressing tone, which Jerome had hard work to steel himself against.

"If matters turn out badly," he said, "could you not persuade your sister to come with you the next day through the garden and out here upon the bank? You can make the pretext of a visit to a sick child at a lodge which shall be stationed under the willows there. It will be as easy, nay, easier, to make the capture there, than it would have been at Madame Jarrot's. A canoe lying *perdue* has only to take its freight and drop a few miles

down to reach the Wisconsin, you know. That once reached, all is accomplished."

"The plan would be an excellent one, if it were not that Madeleine seems of late to have registered a vow not to stir a step without her friend Miss Latimer or my father by her side. To visit a sick child would, I think, be just the sort of thing that would take Miss Grace's fancy and tempt her to obtrude her company."

"And you cannot find an excuse for slipping out without her?"

"I must try, I suppose—invent some excuse, get them both out, and then entice the friend away to look at something wonderful within the lodge, where Madeleine will certainly not care to go. Her friend will be caught with the bait of something that promises the gratification of her Yankee curiosity. Meantime, Tshah-nee-kah can make quick and silent work, I suppose."

"No fears on that score. But one thing: if you do not succeed in persuading your sister, remember, at least, to come yourself and let me know. I will be here to help you with my poor wisdom, and I dare say we can concert with the old chief some other scheme for accomplishing our ends. He will naturally bring all his faculties to the task of rescuing his daughter's husband from the power of the enemy, and restoring him to her arms." It was pleasant to Jerome to see how Monica winced at this stab. "It is rarely," he pursued, "that the first effort in any undertaking is successful: we may be obliged for still a little time longer to watch and wait."

He was about to break off the conference, but Monica laid her hand upon his arm to arrest him.

"Jerome," she said, persuasively, "you will go again to the jail to-morrow, will you not? Tell L'Oiseau Rouge exactly *what* we are doing for him. If you detail to him

all our plans, you may interest him and rouse him from his apathy. You will go, will you not?"

"I cannot say," said Jerome, breaking from her. "That's as it may be. Possibly the wisest thing is not to be talking, even to him, of what we are going to do."

"How changed he is!" said Miss McGregor, looking after him. "He is impatient for his reward, and thinks, I suppose, that he should receive it in part as he goes along. Not so, my poor young friend. I must needs have your services at present, and after that it will be my task to reconcile you to what is inevitable, if I am here. It may be, however,"—and here her lips parted into a smile,—"it may be that I shall be so far away that your reproaches will never reach my ear!"

CHAPTER LXXIII.

Miss McGregor gave no further thought to Jerome's disappointment. She, without delay, returned to the house, and was not ill pleased to find her sister and Miss Latimer engaged with a visitor. The time was past when she preferred the solitude of her own chamber. Having settled, as far as possible, her plans for the coming week, there was no occasion for her to indulge in soliloquies which could not fail to bring an amount of self-upbraiding.

Mrs. Holcomb had already established an intimacy rather with the McGregor mansion than with its inmates. To "run in sociably" of a morning, an afternoon, or an evening, whenever there was anything to tell or anything to find out, was her delight; and if she could make an excuse for prolonging her visits to the hour of dinner or tea,

it was a great point gained. She was not tenacious upon the score of visits in return.

"I understand why you come so seldom," she would say, "and I think you are perfectly right. I do not blame you in the least. Who would wish to leave such a delightful home for a visit to the quarters of a lady who has not even a parlor to seat a friend in? Nothing but a bedroom! Isn't that beautiful! You see I keep my word—no hanging up of a curtain across the room for me! I said I wouldn't, and I won't. If Government puts me into such shabby quarters, Government may take the consequences. I am going to write to papa about it. I think it's rather strange that a general's daughter is allowed to be treated with such indignity. There's Gaylord—I do think he is the meanest *young* officer I ever knew! If he had a spark of gallantry, he'd go in with Burnett and Smithett and let me have his room; it's just about large enough to swing a cat round, and he wouldn't be a bit more crowded in with the others than in his little cubby-hole. But, just because he is above my husband on the list, he insists on having a room to himself. I don't think any girl worth having would ever marry him, if she knew that."

To Madeleine, whose mind was greatly perplexed by much that she had observed of her sister's movements, Mrs. Holcomb's chit-chat this afternoon was particularly distasteful.

From the window of her own room she had seen Monica slip out at the side gate which opened into the lane, and meet Jerome, who was returning to the magasin from an errand to her father. She had watched them saunter together down towards the bank of the river, till they were lost to view behind the willow-trees. Connecting this with her sister's intimate association with young

Tremblay on the afternoon of the Indian sports, as well as with her frequent visits to the magasin of late, she was more and more puzzled and distressed. She had not forgotten the agitating scene she had witnessed at the Portage, nor the conviction that had at that time forced itself upon her; therefore she did not imagine that a tender sentiment had anything to do with the interviews between Jerome and her sister.

"But what can they be laying their heads together about?"

This was the oft-recurring question, to which she could find no satisfactory answer. There was nothing for her but to put it aside, as she was wont to do all knotty questions, with,—

"I must ask Mark what *he* thinks about it."

Mrs. Holcomb was more than usually loquacious this afternoon.

"Oh, girls!" she suddenly broke forth with, "we have had such times at the garrison! I would say such fun, only I suppose Grace would pronounce that unladylike. What do you think? Old Armstrong has been undertaking to discipline a couple of camp-women for the benefit of the officers and soldiers."

"Why do you call him 'Old Armstrong'? Have you quarrelled with him already?" asked her cousin.

"Oh, bless you, no! I know better than to quarrel with my bread and butter—meaning the commanding officer. But I call him old because he *is* as old as the hills. Everybody in the army knows that he pads himself out, and wears corsets, and dyes his hair and whiskers—and I'm not sure but that he wears plumpers in his cheeks—all out of compliment to the ladies. But now, since he has been East and married this pretty, meek little wife, he might afford to give himself some ease and

comfort, one would think. Screwing himself in so tight must make a man cross; and we all know the colonel is cross sometimes. Oh, the colonel and I are great friends! He knows that I like him ever so much. One of these days, when I have felt my ground sufficiently and made him understand how much I admire him, I am going to try to get him to move some of those young fellows and let me have a place to turn round in."

Nobody applauded this happy scheme of the lively lady.

"But why," she cried, "don't you show some interest in the rare doings that I tell you we have had at the Fort?"

"You have not given us a chance yet," said Grace, laughing.

"They were, as I told you, about two camp-women who were always quarrelling,—chiefly with each other, though they'd no objection to try their hand on anybody's hair or face that they had a grudge at. Oh, they were a pair of viragoes—there was no getting along with them. So, when they had pulled each other's caps and scratched each other's faces times without number, and the sergeant had complained of them, and their captain didn't exactly know how to keep the peace between them, and the colonel had threatened to have them drummed out of the garrison to the tune of—well—the Hussy's March, if Grace will excuse me,—all of a sudden the gentleman seems to have thought, 'We'll try what virtue there is in stones,' as the spelling-book says. Not that I think the colonel ever has read any too much in his spelling-book, you know. So he has a post planted on the bank, out beyond the pickets, and a large, stout hoop thrown over it; then he sends for Mrs. Finnerty and Mrs. O'Grady and orders the sergeant-major to tie the right hand of each to the hoop on opposite sides of the post, and to put a stout switch into the left

hand of each, with which she had full leave to belabor her adversary. 'Now,' says the colonel, 'let them give it to each other till they are tired.' I'd have given anything to have seen it all, but I didn't dare. I asked the surgeon's wife if she was going out, just to see, you know, if it would do; and, my goodness! such a look as she gave me! You'd have thought I had asked if she was going to steal one of the colonel's pet pigs. I thought I should catch sight of a little of the sport by running up to the end of the gallery, where there is a corner that looks out that way; but there was such a crowd about the place that all I could see was now and then a rod brandished high in the air and coming down with a whiz. When Holcomb came in, he said the way those two—well, I won't quote the polite term he used—but the way they danced round the May-pole, thrashing and cutting at each other, would have made a parson laugh."

"Oh, Edith, please don't. I do not see how you can——"

"I? It's not I—it is my beloved and respected better half whose words I am giving you. Don't make me responsible for an officer's view of the subject of camp-women, nor of the terms in which he expresses it."

"The officers are to be congratulated that they have found so refined and elevated a style of recreation," remarked Miss McGregor, quietly.

"Oh, it cannot be possible that officers—gentlemen—would be present at such an exhibition!" said Madeleine, unguardedly.

"I don't know who all were there," replied Mrs. Holcomb, rather sharply. "I must confess I cannot see why it is not as suitable an amusement as tying a wolf fast and then setting all the dogs in the garrison to worry him; or as a good many other things that men *do* find pleasure in."

"But a wolf has no sensibilities to be wounded, as a human being—above all, as a woman—has," said Miss Latimer.

"The sensibilities of Mrs. Finnerty and Mrs. O'Grady!" cried Mrs. Holcomb, derisively. "How Holcomb would admire that!"

"I hope the poor women were speedily released," said Madeleine. "If the colonel's idea was to reform them, I can't imagine this sort of punishment would have the effect; and I am sure it was wrong in every other point of view."

"Well, if it will be any relief to your feelings, my dear, or those of my cousin Grace, who is so fond of preaching about sensibilities, I will inform you that the two termagants had to be untied after a very little exercise, because the husband of one of them, who was a corporal, set up such a crying, like a great baby, at the disgrace put upon his dear Biddy."

"I hope he was not obliged to be there to witness it!" said Madeleine, quite shocked.

"Oh, bless you, the colonel had all the men paraded there as spectators, to teach them to observe peaceable behavior. Perhaps he thought, too, it would be a recreation to the bachelor part of the command, as it evidently was to himself."

"You are making out your friend the colonel to be a detestable tyrant," said Miss Latimer, warmly.

"Well, I imagine he is not far from it. Mrs. Armstrong told me herself—by way of impressing upon me, I suppose, how much her husband despised officers who were at all fond of their toddies—that upon one occasion a young officer who had just joined came to report himself, and, being not quite sober, he stumbled and fell his whole length, with his head in the fire-place. The colonel would not so

much as put out his hand to save him from being burned, but called to his orderly and told him to take that man away; and the soldier had to summon in some of his comrades to help him carry off the lieutenant to his quarters."

With anecdotes such as these did Mrs. Holcomb solace her leisure hours.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

THE day before the opening entertainment of *la Sainte Fériale* was the fast for the souls of the departed,—*le jour des Morts.* Monica and Jerome met at the little chapel, and, the solemn service over, the dead remembered and prayed for, they walked forth, prepared to give their thoughts to the living.

"My father will not go to the ball," said Monica. "He has taken cold in some way, and his rheumatism is worse than ever. But a new obstacle arises,—one which will be more difficult to deal with, even, than his presence. He yesterday bought Judge Belden's double carriage; the one, you remember, that the judge got from St. Louis last spring. As long as my father had only me to drive about with him, the old calèche did very well; but now that Madeleine has returned, a barouche and pair of horses are most suitable."

"Of course, there being more of you, a two-seated carriage must be needed," assented Jerome, simply.

"Yes, as you say. Well, we are all to go in it and return together, in accordance with an arrangement my father was mapping out for us at the breakfast table. This will, of course, put an end to our scheme for to-morrow night."

"I don't see that," said Jerome, thoughtfully. "In fact, Monique, it strikes me that we cannot exactly tell beforehand what will or what will not take place. Of this one thing I am sure, Tshah-nee-kah will be at his post to-morrow evening. I have seen him myself. He will lie concealed near M. Jarrot's house. If matters seem to be going amiss, so that we cannot accomplish all that we wish to-morrow evening, we can at least see and talk with the old chief. I will contrive it, and we can settle on some plan of action for the next evening, or the next but one. After all, this move about the double carriage may not be without its advantage. Your father, I suppose, has had his horses from the farm brought in, to use in harness. They are such fine saddle-horses that you and your sister may, some day soon, be tempted to take a ride——"

"On horseback so late in the season, Jerome?"

"Oh, to call on the Morrins, for instance. It is a short distance, but a lonely road, you know. You might be induced to stay to tea and return home after dark. Oh, there are many things that may turn up. You and Tshah-nee-kah are so wise and clear-headed, you will hit upon something if, as I don't much fear, you should be disappointed to-morrow night."

"But to-morrow night at the party, surrounded by all the world, how can I possibly, without observation, hold an interview with Tshah-nee-kah?"

"Oh, I think we can contrive it. Leave it to me. I will take care that you are neither seen nor suspected. Have *you* not said that you relied on me? and have I ever yet deceived you, Monique?"

Monica thought there was reproach in his tone. Did he suspect the game she was playing? He must not—for the world he must not. She could not at the moment meet his eye, but she murmured, tenderly,—

"Indeed, my friend, you are all goodness and truth. I do confide in you to the utmost. Only tell me what is best for me to do, and you shall see how implicit is the faith I repose in you."

She wondered that Jerome did not seize her hand in rapturous devotion, but immediately she remembered that she had schooled him into self-command, and she doubted not that he was promising himself full indemnification when the right moment should arrive.

Monica had so much of kind, womanly feeling left as to say to her sister the next morning,—

"I think, Madeleine, we will wear our dark silks, with high neck and long sleeves, this evening; the nights are getting rather chilly, you know."

It will perhaps lessen Madeleine in the estimation of our readers, if we whisper that she was not entirely indifferent in the matter of her dress on this occasion. A vision of her own slender form in a white tucked muslin with blue sash and shoulder-knots, as was then the fashion for young girls, had been flitting through her mind, and the substitution of a heavy dark silk, which was not particularly becoming, was not to her taste. She could not bring herself to utter her full thought, but she said, truthfully,—

"Madame Jarrot will think we are wanting in respect to her if we do not look our best, you know."

"I think she will be satisfied if we contrive not to outshine her daughter Sophie. If we go in a regular ball-dress, it may strike her that we are endeavoring to eclipse all the others."

"But I was not going to put on a regular ball-dress. My white muslin is quite simple, you know."

"I suppose it is nicer and more expensive than any others of the company can afford to wear; but perhaps that

is right. My father is, I fancy, a good deal richer than Monsieur Jarrot, or any of his intimate associates."

"I think, however, Monica, that a rich, dark silk has a more expensive look than a plain white muslin—don't you?"

"The silk is, at any rate, more comfortable on a cool evening."

"Comfortable? Oh, dear! I am not afraid of being uncomfortable in my muslin, if that is all."

"That is not all, by any means," was Monica's thought; but her outspoken words were a yielding of the point in dispute:—

"Well, then, since you prefer not to accept my suggestion, I will follow your example and wear muslin also." A stretch of condescension that amazed Miss Latimer, who had not happened to witness an instance of the kind before.

When Madeleine went in the evening, after her toilet was completed, to her father's apartment, where M. Tremblay was receiving his parting injunctions to prudence and watchfulness, she had the satisfaction of hearing her taste applauded.

"Ah! that is right, my daughters. A white dress for a young lady is the prettiest in the world."

Madeleine gave one more look at herself in the mirror—saw that her curls were hanging in the nicest order over her shoulders, and that her wreath of green leaves interspersed with crimson apple-buds was placed so as to confine them exactly in their proper place. She was then ready for her father's whisper, as he drew her towards him,—

"Mallie, darling, if young Logan asks you to dance, I have not the slightest objection. I have observed him carefully, and I see that he is not inclined to presume on any politeness that we may show him. Besides, a Sainte Fériale ball is not exactly an occasion where one can ap-

pear exclusive. It would not do to be putting on airs at one of them. Besides, Logan is quite as much of a gentleman as—well, as any one I know of, for the matter of that."

Madeleine smiled. "No, papa," she said, in the same low tone, "I will not be putting on airs. I will dance with Mr. Logan if he asks me—and if I do not feel too tired."

M. Tremblay, who had been admiring the two elder young ladies, was now ready with his compliments to the youngest. "Ah! Miss Madeleine, so prit', so *comme il faut!* Jess so my daught' shall look, when dey come to be young lady of company and go wid de young gent' to one leet' frolique!"

"Well, monsieur, we will not detain you, since you have, as we are aware, to escort Madame Tremblay and Miss Thérèse to the ball. It was extremely obliging in you to call at all; and I am greatly indebted to you for your kind offer to take my place and have an eye to my young people. I hope they will make you as little trouble as possible. If you will just have the goodness to receive them on their arrival, and kindly put them into the carriage when the dance is over, I believe that is the extent to which they need trespass upon you."

The words were met with an animated protest from the gallant old gentleman:—

"*Oh, non, non—assurément* I shall dance wid all three both. Dey mus' consider me engage for dat. I shall not be so *grossier*, me, to negleck dem. *A bientôt, nos demoiselles*—we shall have one such nice leet' frolique!"

With courteous gestures the kindly-intentioned M. Tremblay set off to commence his round of duteous pleasure; and after a sufficient delay, the clock having approached within ten minutes of the appointed hour of seven, the young ladies carefully put on their wrappings and prepared to set forth.

"I beg you, Madeleine, to put a very large and warm shawl around you," said Miss McGregor, earnestly, when they reached the hall.

"Why, of course I shall," said Madeleine, looking at her sister in some surprise. "What is the matter, dear, that you seem so anxious about me?"

Monica turned away and busied herself about her own preparations, without further word upon the subject.

CHAPTER LXXV.

"WHY, Jerome, is that you?" called Miss McGregor to an equestrian who reined up beside the carriage just after they had passed through the village. "Why are you not attending your mother, or your aunt?"

"Because I do not fancy walking all that distance in my dancing-shoes," said the young man.

"Ah! then it was not gallantry, and the wish to act as our special cavalier, that brought you to our side?" said Monica.

"I should be only too happy to be permitted," was the reply of the young métif. "Perhaps I may act upon the hint by-and-by."

Madeleine listened in amazement. Such familiarity between them! What could Monica mean? And evidently Jerome was taking advantage of her graciousness; for his tone, as well as his words, was, to say the least, not deferential.

Madeleine had not been completely reassured, even by Logan's arguments. The latter had reasoned from the premises presented to his observation; but his conclusions were correct only in part. He had arrived at the convic-

tion that the infatuation of Jerome, which had been the first sequence of Miss McGregor's coquetry, had passed away. There were no longer the start, the mantling color, the trembling hand, the inattention to surrounding interests, upon the first faint rustle of her silk dress approaching his desk at the magasin. Instead of the passionate light which had been wont to flash in his eyes as he caught sight of her, there was now a heavy look, as of pain, with occasionally a fierce, sombre gleam from under his brows, which, had it been towards a man, Logan would have thought boded him no good. Jerome had evidently discovered that he was being trifled with; and the bourgeois felt all the sympathy of a generous heart with the sufferings which such a conviction must bring.

That the conferences between them continued, and that the two seemed as confidential as ever, puzzled Logan; but his anxiety took a direction that he could not impart to Madeleine. If Miss McGregor had really any deep-laid scheme against her sister's welfare, could it be that she would call into her counsels one so simple, so transparent, as Jerome? No; it must be rather some secret effort to be made in behalf of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah,—probably some scheme to release the young chief from his dungeon by aid of stratagem, such as his own people knew how to practise; and, as Logan in his heart wished such effort success, he was not inclined to throw any obstacle in the way of the young lady and her coadjutor, as far as that was concerned. Only in regard to his beloved would he be lynx-eyed; for the rest, Monica, he was certain, was safe, so far as her intimacy with Jerome was the question. She knew what she was about; Madeleine need give herself no uneasiness on that score. With assurances such as these Mark had striven to comfort her, but without entire success. And, in his pity for the young métif, he had of

late accorded him many indulgences, and overlooked many inadvertences, which would at another time have been emphatically commented upon.

Knowing that Jerome was unhappy, Logan had not been surprised at a remark from him as they walked from dinner to the magasin, that very afternoon:—"I think I shall apply to Mr. McGregor for the privilege of changing places with my brother up the river. I should like to go to the wintering ground among the Sioux at Lac Pepin, better than staying here at the desk. And Napoleon is a capital accountant,—better than I; in fact, I find myself not so ready, of late, as formerly."

"Yes, I have remarked that myself," said the bourgeois, kindly.

"Then you will perhaps recommend the change, if you find opportunity?"

"If you wish it, I certainly will. A winter in the free air, with plenty of hunting and fishing, may make your duties next year seem less irksome to you."

"Many thanks!" was Jerome's quiet response; and nothing more was said upon the subject.

The house of M. Jarrot was of moderate size and unpretending exterior, as were the homes of most of the early *habitans*.

It was built of logs hewed and squared,—a solid, substantial structure, with rooms of sufficient size, but of which the ceilings were low, the windows small, and the walls whitewashed.

Nothing more simple and primitive could well be imagined, unless it were "a lodge in some vast wilderness."

There was no lack of comfort within, however. The floors were ordinarily covered with the neat, pretty mats which the Indian women fabricate with so much taste; but these had been removed for this evening, as well as

the tables and most of the chairs, in order to give as much accommodation as possible to the dancers. One other piece of furniture had been allowed to remain,—a long, heavy wooden sofa, or settee, made luxurious by an ample wolf-skin robe, which screened all its ugliness from view.

Madame Jarrot's bedroom, which adjoined the parlor, had also been vacated, and Sophie and her brother, aided by Jerome and one or two other young friends, had decorated the walls with evergreens, and hung little tin reflectors, described by M. Tremblay as "von *scont* here and anoder *scont* dere," to hold the candles which had been sent at an early hour by the proper contributor.

The officers who were to grace the entertainment with their presence had kindly proffered to send the band from the garrison; but the hosts, true to their traditions, declined displacing the two violins which had for years discoursed the strains most inspiring to the gay French nature of the unostentatious *habitans*.

The powers of the orchestra may be understood from the customary boast in their favor, "They can begin at four in the afternoon and play you till breakfast-time next morning, and never repeat the same tune more than three times!"

Can a modern violinist boast a similar répertoire?

The dances in vogue were chiefly cotillons, as quadrilles were then called; not merely the hackneyed figures of Le Pantalon, L'Eté, and La Poule, but an infinite variety besides—La Grande Ronde, Le Prisonnier, and, prettiest and most graceful of all, La Révérence, of which our modern Lancers are an imitation.

Then there was the Gigue, commencing by a couple taking the floor, chassée-ing and balancée-ing to each other for a time, introducing all their nicest steps and most graceful movements, until suddenly a third would "cut

in." If a lady, the one already on the floor retired, and left her cavalier to the new-comer, until he should, in his turn, be displaced by a rival,—thus changing and changing, leaving always one gentleman and one lady upon the floor, the music all the time going on without interruption; the signal for a cessation was only given when the musicians came to a dead stop from sheer fatigue.

There was another dance, "Les Olivettes,"—but of that in its proper place.

The company assembled on these occasions consisted, for the most part, of the French Canadian and half-breed citizens—a gay, simple, cordial people, the young men with all the good breeding that ease and a desire to please can confer, the girls with a grace of manner and movement too often wanting in more elevated and aristocratic circles. Their frank and good-humored merriment, expressing itself in laugh and jest, uttered in the soft, liquid, musical tones which distinguish the mixed lineage which most of them could claim, had a peculiar charm. Among all who were happy to-night, Sophie was most radiant. Had she not had Jerome by her side for the greater part of the day, and was she not engaged to him for the first dance? Was she not, too, almost certain that what she had feared of a bewilderment in regard to her friend Monique was, after all, not exactly a bewilderment, but merely a passing intimacy, which had its origin in circumstances which she could not, it is true, quite understand, but which seemed now to exist no longer?

So Sophie, her clear, bright hazel eyes sparkling and her cheeks all aglow with pleasurable excitement, received her mother's guests with graceful *empressement*, and was assiduous in arranging all things for their comfort and enjoyment.

There were two among the guests who, under a mask

of tranquillity, were hiding feelings of which the gnawing of the fox at the heart-strings would have been no hyperbolical illustration.

Throughout the day,—the last, as she told herself, of power to draw back and retrace the path she had begun to tread,—Monica had been striving to avert her mental gaze from the reality of that which she was yet resolved to carry through. The picture, in all its hideous features, would make itself visible as it had never before done, and there were moments when an actual horror would seize her, and with a shrinking dread she would ask herself,—

"Shall I? Is there not some other way?"

Her gentle young sister,—innocent, as she was forced to admit, of intentional wrong towards herself or her people,—was it absolutely necessary to expose her to suffering and hardship, to the woes and despair of captivity,—and *such a captivity*,—perhaps to death! Possibly to a fate a thousandfold worse than death; for were there not wrongs of their own to be avenged by those into whose hands she was being betrayed?

The time was past when Monica could delude herself with the assurance, "They will be kind to her. Tshah-nee-kah, for my sake, will be kind to her." She knew the grim old chief and his daughter too well to believe that there would be any forbearance on their part. Should the Government fail to accept the restoration of her sister as a ransom for the Red Bird and his companion, then woe to the unfortunate victim who had been offered as the purchase! The Winnebagoes would remember the past. The whites had shown no mercy—they should receive none at the hands of those they had injured!

It was hard for Miss McGregor to crush down these considerations; yet crush them down she did, chiefly by turning her thoughts to the hapless, despairing Wau-nig-

sootsh-kah, for whose sake all must be dared and endured. "I will see Tshah-nee-kah myself," she resolved. "I will impress upon him that only as Madeleine is returned safe and without undue suffering can he hope that his whole country will escape being ravaged by fire and sword; that in the event of anything beyond the most indulgent captivity being for a time her lot, the life of not a single Ho-tshung-rah will be spared by the Big Knives."

Whether Tshah-nee-kah would believe all this, she did not pause to ask herself; let it be as it might, she dreamed not for a moment of flinching an iota in her purpose.

Jerome's thoughts were not less dark and gloomy than Monica's; their tendency, however, was to produce a restless excitement. His features and movements were less under control than those of his confederate, and it was only by flinging himself into the humor of the occasion that he could find a vent for the tumult of his feelings.

"How gay you are, Jerome!" said Sophie, as he almost seized her in his eagerness to lead her to her place in the dance.

"Gay! Of course I am—why shouldn't I be?"

"But not quite so—so wild. Remember my maxim: 'Parlez-moi, mais ne touchez-moi pas!'" said Sophie, drawing away from him and giving her quotation in the broadest patois, at which they both laughed merrily.

Jerome, having secured the position he desired, as the vis-à-vis of Miss McGregor and his father, became more serious. The dance had for one of its changes the favorite one of the March Cotillon, and during one of its evolutions Monica managed to say in a low voice to Jerome,—

"I must speak with you. Contrive some way for my doing so."

"What were you and Monique whispering about?" was the prompt question of the observant Sophie.

"I was thanking her for being so amiable as to dance with my father, when there are two young officers who would give their heads to be in his place."

"Oh, yes; Monique can be very amiable! She will have to dance with the officers, of course, and with my brother Médore, and after that with Mr. Logan, I suppose. She may do that, for I see her little sister dances with him. And she will naturally dance with Mr. Ewing, he being so much at her father's; and after a time *you* will have to dance with her, Jerome," said the cunning Sophie.

"Yes, of course," assented Jerome, with a nonchalant air. He had, however, hardly disposed of his partner before he was by Monica's side.

"In the next dance we can say what we have to say," he murmured, "if you will but call a figure which will give us an opportunity—the Prisoner, for instance."

Hardly were they upon the floor and the introductory ceremonies gone through, when Miss McGregor was ready with her question.

"Jerome, why did you come to the party on horseback?"

"Did you look carefully at me?"

"No—why should I?"

"If you had, you might have observed a heavy blue blanket folded under my saddle——"

"Side couple, right and left!" sounded from the prompter.

"Yes, I see—I understand; it was very thoughtful of you. Do you know if he is here?"

"He has been, and will be at his post again later in the evening."

"And can anything be done?" She raised her eyes anxiously to his.

"There are eyes watching us," he said, offering her his hand in obedience to the word,—

"Turn partners to places!"

Jerome found opportunity for one word more.

"Logan will probably ask Sophie next dance, or the one after; he told me so. Slip out then into the next room, so that nobody shall ask you, and I will join you there."

For the next dance, however, Miss McGregor was seized upon by Mr. Gaylord, and after that by the son of their hostess, so that some little time elapsed before she and Jerome could join each other as agreed upon; but after a time they found themselves in Madame's bedroom, wedged into a corner behind a group of the elders, who preferred looking upon the performances of their young people in this smaller apartment, away from what they called "*le grand monde.*"

It was impossible but that every word should be overheard; for the din of the two fiddles near the door-way made it necessary for the speakers to raise their voices above a whisper.

"Luckily, they none of them understand English," said Jerome. "Now let us settle matters, if possible, no one the wiser."

CHAPTER LXXVI.

"In the first place, at what precise spot has *The Autumn** stationed himself?" said Miss McGregor, avoiding the mention of a name in French or Puan which might be recognized if overheard.

"He is, or is soon to be, behind the tuft of cedars in the corner of the yard near the end of the porch."

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* Tshah-nee-kah.

"And where are his people?"

"Some are with the horses, close by; some with the canoe over in the Rapid-rolling* River; The Otter,† with his friends and another canoe, on the Great River,‡ at the foot of your father's garden. They are provided, you see, for all emergencies."

"And what does he propose? What is his advice?"

"He leaves all to you. He is ready to act when you have planned."

Miss McGregor pondered.

"It seems almost hopeless," she at length said, "to attempt to take her from here, exposed to observation as every movement must be. She would be missed; there would be a tumult and a pursuit; she would be retaken, and nothing, or *worse* than nothing, be accomplished."

"It seems so."

"Then, Jerome, what can be done? Can you think of nothing?"

The young man did not answer at once. It was pleasant to him to perceive how much she was in his power; to know that although by speaking one word he could turn all her sorrow into joy unutterable, yet to hug himself with a resolve that that word should not be spoken. No; not for the world would he impart to her a piece of news he had accidentally heard from Donohue just as he was setting off for the ball,—namely, that the sheriff of the county had sent on his resignation to the Governor, at Detroit, and that before another appointment could be made, the day set for the execution of the two

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* The Wisconsin.

† To-shun-neek.

‡ The Mississippi. The habitans used this method of disguising the subject of their discourse in the presence of Indians who might have picked up some of their language.

criminals would have passed, and they, as a matter of course, be declared free, there being no functionary to execute the law's behests. "The day is gone by when I could do her that grace," he said to himself. Then, aloud,—

"I have heard my mother talking, for a day or two past, of a little party she proposes to give the day after to-morrow. She wishes to invite the ladies of the garrison, yourselves, and a few others. Perhaps your father will, however, be well enough——"

"No, no. He said to-day that he was going to keep housed for a fortnight, unless he was entirely well."

"Then, possibly, as my father's house is at no great distance, you ladies might choose to walk, rather than use the carriage."

"Of course we should not think of aping the style of cities; particularly if simple fashions would better answer our purpose."

"And would you be likely to have any other attendant than Baptiste, the little poltroon whom we all know?"

"I presume not. Who is there that my father could summon for our escort, unless it were one of the clerks or engagés?"

"Then, while you are on your way, if *The Autumn* and *The Black Otter* should come bounding forward from their ambush, at a certain point of the road where there are sure to be no listeners or spectators, and if they should amuse themselves by brandishing their tomahawks and making alarming demonstrations, you would naturally all take to flight."

"The others would. I should probably show my lineage by keeping my ground."

"Of course the Puans would neither of them mistake you for another. But it would be necessary to have

some mark by which to distinguish your sister from her friend."

"If I stood my ground, there would perhaps be no need of that."

Jerome looked at her. "Was she a woman, or was she——" He did not finish the sentence, even in his secret thought.

"There seems, then," he said, after a moment's pause, "only to let *The Autumn* know what your plan is, and its details."

"Your plan, you should rather say. I should never have been capable of originating so simple and yet so feasible a scheme. Jerome, you must not disparage yourself henceforth—you are simply admirable!"

He gave a low laugh. His satisfaction and gratitude for her compliment were not so demonstrative as she expected; but this she gladly excused; as she went on:—

"And you will not forget a single point of all that we have settled on?"

"I think it much safer that you should concert every particular, yourself, with The Autumn. Think how disastrous the slightest mis-step would be!"

"No doubt that would be best. But how to see him and concert with him?"

"Cannot you slip out unobserved and talk a few minutes with him? He will be at his post, behind the cedars, in about an hour from this."

"Impossible! Such a thing is not to be thought of. Somebody would be sure to espy me."

"Then at the moment when all are going away."

"I should certainly be missed. You forget that I have to ride in the carriage with Madeleine and Miss Latimer."

"True. Well, then, suppose you tell your sister and her friend, as they are about leaving, that you have de-

cided to remain all night with Sophie. You can put on your things, you know, and go out with them; then you can come to the conclusion to stay, just at the last moment. Being very well wrapped, you will not feel the cold much, as you steal off the end of the porch to the place where The Autumn is concealed, while I keep guard near by."

"Sophie, however, is not expecting me to stay."

"Then, in that case, you and I can walk quietly home after your interview with The Autumn. I suppose some of your people will be still up in the house to let you in? Baptiste, for instance, will not have finished putting up his horses."

"Jerome, you amaze me! I had not given you credit for such an inventive genius. Nothing could be better planned, or more easy of execution, than your whole scheme. It is, as you say, far better that I should see The Autumn and detail to him every feature of our project. With a little adroit management, you will contrive that I shall get to him unobserved. And now we will dismiss the subject for the present. My mind is at ease, after so many days and weeks of uncertainty. What do I not owe you, my friend?"

"Are you coming back into the parlor?" said Jerome, abruptly. "Sophie has probably finished her dance by this time, and will be looking for us."

"She will be satisfied if she sees you," said Monica, smiling.

"I will go first for a little while and compliment Madame Badeau yonder upon the looks and dancing of little Genevieve. It is well to keep one's self in the good graces of the honest people around here, in case that, after all, our plans should miscarry, and the Red Bird be left to the mercies of a petition or some such effort."

The "mirth and fun" had "waxed faster," if not more furious, as Jerome found on his return to the larger apartment.

Captain Lovel had arrived, and was making his salutations, which were never in the form of a whisper. He had brought Lieutenant Smithett with him, and was now mischievously enjoying the manner in which that young gentleman acquitted himself under circumstances so new to him.

Acting on his captain's suggestion, he had already drawn from his pocket a bottle of olives, which he presented to Sophie, remarking, in a phrase he had diligently studied out for the occasion,—

"Je veux payer pour mon entrée."

Sophie blushed, but took the offering, saying, politely,—

"Pas besoin, je vous assure, monsieur."

Mr. Smithett, pleased with his success, followed up his first effort with a second.

"Une jolie partie!" then, looking around indulgently, "il faut que les génisses se divertissent."

It was not possible for the young girls, who had clustered around to admire a package of green wax candles which Captain Lovel was placing in Sophie's hand, to refrain from opening wide their eyes and looking a little offended at this strange sally.

"Nous, des génisses! par exemple?" they whispered.

Captain Lovel was less reticent. He fairly roared with laughter, in which one after another of his neighbors soon joined, at whatever cost of good manners.

"Upon my word, young gentleman," his senior cried, when he could articulate, "you speak French yourself, as an engagé would express it, 'comme un veau Espagnole.'"*

* Like a Spanish calf.

"Why, what is the matter? What have I said? What have I done?" asked the frightened young gentleman.

"You have merely called the young ladies heifers, and remarked that they ought to amuse themselves."

"I don't believe it—that is, excuse me, I know I never said anything of the kind. I said *young people;* I never thought of such a thing as *heifers.* What should I know about heifers, brought up, as I have been, in the city of New York? I used a very polite phrase, that I took great pains to learn out of my vocabulary expressly for this occasion." And the poor little man stamped, and almost shed tears of rage.

"Of course," remarked a young man of the company, without much bettering the matter, "*la jeunesse* and *les génisses* are so very much alike that any one might mistake them for each other. Come, monsieur, let me introduce you to my sister, who seems to be admiring your gift, which is quite new to us all."

So Mr. Smithett was soothed and made much of, till he was able to answer with equanimity the inquiries,—

"Are they plums?" "Are they pickles?" "Are they to be cooked, or eaten as they are?" "Would it not be a good thought to save those beautiful green candles that monsieur the captain has brought, and present them to M. Saint Vrain for the altar, rather than use them to dance by?" By which time the self-complacence of the little lieutenant was restored.

"But where is Monique? It will soon be time for her to come and oversee the supper-table, as she promised. One would wish to have things at least respectable, since we have so much of *le grand monde* this evening."

Sophie was the speaker. Some young companion answered,—

"Oh, for Monique, she does not come much with us,

you know. She seems always in a reverie—not at all like the other young people. Not like her sister, for instance. Look at her standing there, and monsieur the bourgeois bending over to speak low to her."

"Yes, and she looking shyly up and then down again, as if—as if—I wonder if McGregor would like that, and he so proud! But did you not see her the day of the payment? She had hold of his arm! Yes—I assure you—his very arm!"

"But is she not pretty?" rejoined the other. "Oh, far prettier than Monique, who is called so handsome!"

Madeleine, flushed with the exercise of "The Chantreuse,"* which she had just gone down, and with her moistened hair a little put back from her forehead, was standing in animated conversation with the bourgeois, now for a second time her partner. They were making the most of the golden minutes so rarely occurring.

Miss McGregor, who had just returned to the apartment, was, like the young métives, caught by the sight.

"What right has she to be so much happier than I?" was her gloomy thought. "Even though her lover is one almost a menial, there seems no obstacle in the way of her enjoyment. My father, by his presence, might have interrupted their love-making; then, of course, my father falls lame, and leaves his pet to the care of an imbecile, whose study seems to be to throw the lamb into the jaws of the wolf."

Her own simile startled her, and brought a different train of thought and feeling.

"Their happiness will be but short-lived—I suppose they are right to make the most of it. Day after to-morrow is to be the Tremblay tea-party, Jerome said; that

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* An air very much like the Scottish "Loch Erroch Side."

will be Saturday. Ah, yes—that was always Domitile's day for having company. She used to say it obliged people to go home early, and gave one a good chance to sleep late the next morning after the entertainment." Monica was glad to banish solemn and dreadful thoughts by trifles like these, until Sophie, seeking her to aid in the arrangement of the supper-table, broke in, and dispersed some of the visions with which her busy brain was teeming.

The supper on these occasions was not a gorgeous repast. From the nature of the entertainment, there could be no ostentatious display—the contributions of the different guests making up the staple of the bill of fare. There were this evening, as we have seen, a few articles of luxury from the sutler's store—Smithett's olives, Gaylord's preserved ginger, and a very respectable-looking fruit-cake, made by the baker of Company "D," by order of his genial bachelor lieutenant. The viands were, however, for the most part of the substantial, homely kind: excellent coffee, tea, and biscuits, boiled ham, chickens, grouse, and à-la-mode venison. There might be some pairs of roasted ducks, and a dish of *avrignelles*, or of *crêpes aux pommes*, there being no restriction in the matter. The exercise of dancing gave the company excellent appetites, and it was not a part of good breeding to mince and appear fastidious. The supper was to be *enjoyed* as well as partaken of; and enjoying it most of the company were, at a rather late hour, when Jerome glided in with the information,—

"It is growing cold very fast. Have any of you been to the door? It is cold enough for Christmas. I should not wonder if we had snow before morning."

"Before morning? Why, it's almost morning now. It was after eleven when we came in to supper," said Mr.

Smithett, looking at his watch. There were exclamations on all hands.

"Snow, and we so far to walk! Really, that is not amusing! Had we not better set off at once? for it will never do to be caught in a snow-storm."

"Let us first go and see what the weather is. If it is only a little *grêle*, nobody minds that."

And as, in obedience to the last suggestion, the room partially cleared of the anxious company, Jerome found opportunity to whisper to Miss McGregor,—

"I've set all the old people worrying, and ere long they will be hurrying their girls home, which is what I aimed at. It is time that Tshah-nee-kah was released from his watch."

The report brought from without was,—

"No danger of snow yet, these two hours. We can have two more cotillons or contra-danses, at the least, and then wind up with 'Les Olivettes.'"

"No, no," cried the chaperons, in chorus. "No cotillons! no more dancing, except just Les Olivettes—nothing more. Les Olivettes, and then we take our departure."

"Yes, certainement," assented M. Tremblay to the young ladies under his charge. "Les Olivettes, and den we mus' wind ourselves up."

CHAPTER LXXVII.

"But who ever heard of a Sainte Fériale ball breaking up before three o'clock? And now it is hardly one!" grumbled the young people.

"Ah! but the snow! What is one hour, two hours more of dancing, if you have to pay for it with tooth-ache or rheumatism?"

"Well, then," they whispered, "the only thing is to spin out Les Olivettes as long as possible." And each swain hastened to secure his favorite lady as partner in the dance.

The bourgeois and Madeleine, Ewing and Miss Latimer, Jerome and Sophie, Gaylord and Miss McGregor—yes, even in this last dance Monica could stand up and take part with a zest and apparent hilarity that astonished Jerome, with all his aboriginal self-control.

It was not every one who could dance Les Olivettes, it being not a dance of universal fashion among the *habitans*. The favored few who could boast an ancestry from the old country, or who had figured in the merry-makings of certain of our frontier posts, were alone *au fait;* and it was by them that others of the present company had been to some degree initiated into its mirthful mysteries.

"But who is to call for us? There has been no prompter appointed. Captain Lovel, are you to be our conductor? You must know how to call Les Olivettes? They dance it at several of the posts!" cried one and another, as the captain appeared from the supper-room, his face shining in a richer crimson glow than usual, from out its frame of white whiskers.

"I? Oh, no—you have got a bourgeois there; make him call," cried the jolly captain.

"One cannot call and dance at the same time," said Logan.

"Well, then, there's Monsieur—I beg pardon—Colonel Tremblay. He is just the person, because he speaks both French and English so well!"

M. Tremblay bowed and looked delighted.

"But what if I shall make some blunders—me?" he suggested.

"Oh, never mind," cried the captain; "I shall be by

your side to set you right. All that you have to do is to remember the names and the movements, and to mix them up as much as you can in giving the word of command. I will be umpire, and decide when a young fellow loses his place, if that will help you."

The gallant old gentleman, seeing himself thus called by general acclaim to the post of honor, took his station, with many bows, at the head of the dance, which was already formed after the fashion of a contra-danse.

"I shall give de name in English," he said, "because our young gent is so many American. De French demoiselle shall learn to remember her name all de same."

In this merry dance the prompter or conductor assigns to each lady a name, either of his own invention or else one of customary usage. The sport is similar in character to that of the English game of "Coach."

The head gentleman begins by balancing and turning each lady whose name is called by the prompter, and it is the part of this functionary to keep time and tune with his voice to the violins as he gives his orders.

If either the dancer, or the lady whose name is called, fails in an immediate response to the word of command, a forfeit is declared, the delinquent is counted out, and takes his or her seat, and the next one begins. The ladies generally remembering their own names, it is seldom that they are condemned to pay forfeits.

"Now—take your places all," cried Monsieur—or, if the reader please, Colonel—Tremblay.

"Miss Monique, you stand first; you shall not have one of de old hugly name. Let me see—you shall be de girl wid de red posy."

"Scarlet posy would perhaps fit the music better," suggested Captain Lovel, humming the tune.

"Ah, yes!—'Now to de girl wid de scarlet posy,'—dat

will do extremely capital. Ver' nice! And you, Sophie, you shall be 'de girl wid de linsey-woolsey petticoat.'"

Sophie made a little grimace.

"And Miss Latimore, she shall be 'de girl wid de heel'—Oh, no! dat too bad for de nice young lady."

"Not at all, monsieur. I am not particular," said Grace, with a merry laugh. "'The girl with a heel and toe,' is it?"

"No; worser as dat. 'De girl wid de heel in de hole of her stocking!' Now de pritty young lady not have no heel dere at all. Shall you be Peter—Peter Somebody's daughter?"

"No, no; let me be the other, please. I shall remember it better."

"Well, den it is so. And Genevieve, she is not ver' beeg, she shall be little Polly Few-clothes. Don't forget dat, ma petite Genevieve."

"Oh, du tout, monsieur."

"And Archange, she is 'de girl wid de silver buckle.' Comprenez-vous, mon enfant?"

"Oh, yes, sir," said the young girl, proud to show her English.

"And Miss Madeleine, she shall be——" The colonel looked puzzled.

"I think," said Madeleine, throwing back her hair with both hands, "I might pass for 'the girl with her hair in a tangle.'"

"Dat is excellent!—dat just fit," said the colonel, humming the strain with great glee,—

"Now to de girl wid her hair in a tangle,
Tid re-i-de i-dow,
Tid re-i-de i-dow.—

Dat go ever so nice, so nice. And you, Marie, you be Peter——"

"Swisshelm's daughter," suggested Captain Lovel.

"Yes, Peter Swisson's daughter. And Julie, de girl what play on de jews-harp. And Madame Du Pin, she be de girl wid de checker pocker-han'kerchief; and ma vieille—oh, no; she is to take *les amendes*—what you call forfeits. She cannot dance. And now we all ready. Commencez, and be sure you don't nobody make no mistake."

At a signal the music struck up, and Gaylord led off to the tune of La Boulangère. Being, however, unaccustomed to the dance, he soon grew confused, seized upon Madeleine for the "girl wid de heel in de hole of her stocking," and, amid much clapping of hands and laughter, was sent to deposit his seal ring as a forfeit with Madame Tremblay, and himself on one side as a spectator.

Jerome came next; and he kept up well, while his father drove him hither and thither, calling now the name of one near the head, now one at the foot, and anon varying the order by a shout of "Backy back, and down de middling!" as signal for a general dos-à-dos—or "Cross hands, right an' left—figure down de centre!'

It was truly "dancing the hays," to keep up to the mark. Jerome divined the impatience of Miss McGregor. He knew that she was expecting him to commit an early blunder in order to shorten the dance; but the vanity of acquitting himself well, and perhaps a spice of malice, prompted him to hold on until, at the call "Now to leetle Polly Few-Clothes!" he really made the mistake of offering to turn his young neighbor Julie, instead of little Genevieve Badeau, when he too was forced to pay his forfeit.

Ewing and Logan both showed that they had good memories and quick ears; and Monica thought, first of one and then of the other, that he would never have done. She

stood groaning inwardly, in an agony of impatience, half resolving to blunder when her name was next called, and steal out for the interview with the old chief.

The dread of observation and detection, however, kept her in her place until each successive dancer had gone through, with more or less applause, his part in Les Olivettes, and M. Tremblay, hoarse yet glorious, was released from his vocal labors by the last dancer being left standing upon the floor.

"If the olive-gatherers amuse themselves in this way after their day's labor," said Logan to his partner, "they must be a less indolent, enervated people than we are accustomed to consider them."

"Ah, you know, then, where the name comes from?" said Captain Lovel, looking at him in some surprise. "It was little Mossop that first adopted it, I think, to show that he had been up the Mediterranean." And the captain further said to himself, "I wonder what there is that that young fellow doesn't know!"

Logan, as soon as the dance was fairly finished, went forth to look at the night. Having ascertained that the carriage had been sent, well supplied with buffalo-robes and blankets, he hastened back to the company.

"No redeeming of forfeits, young ladies," he said, "unless you wish to ride home in a snow-storm. The ground is already covered, and the thick flakes are blowing as well as falling."

"Not to redeem the forfeits? What a pity! it is such fun!" murmured the young girls, as their mothers hastily summoned them to make ready for their departure.

Logan, in his anxiety on Madeleine's account, had ventured to hurry the young ladies, and Monica showed herself fully on the alert.

"We must wrap ourselves up well," she said. "I hope,

Madeleine, you took the same precaution that I did, and wore good, comfortable moccasins. Miss Latimer, are your feet well guarded?"

"Yes," said Grace. "I think, though, it can hardly be necessary to muffle ourselves more than usual, seeing we are to go in the carriage."

Notwithstanding her seeming haste, Miss McGregor fidgeted long at the lacing of her moccasins,—so long, indeed, that almost every other guest had left before she was ready to accompany her party to say good-night, or rather good-morning, to Monsieur and Madame Jarrot.

"It is really unfortunate that it is such a cold, blustering night!" she thought. "If it had only been mild and pleasant! but it can't be helped. Tshah-nee-kah must be patient."

Monsieur Tremblay and his two ladies were waiting at the door. In spite of the snow, the conscientious old gentleman would fulfil to the letter his promise to Mr. McGregor of seeing his daughters into their carriage.

"It is too bad that they have waited here for us!" whispered Monica. "Madeleine, suppose you ask Madame Tremblay and Miss Thérèse to ride home with you. You and Grace can take Madame on the back seat with you. It is but crowding a little."

"And you?"

"Oh, I will not go. I will stay all night with Sophie. She will be glad to have me. I really cannot bear that these two ladies——"

"Neither can I. Pray ask them. But I think we can take you too."

"No, no; I will remain. Let Monsieur drive, and Baptiste can run on ahead."

"My father will take my horse," said Jerome. "He is tied just beyond there."

"Dat is ver' capital," said M. Tremblay. "See what it

is to have one good son! And such kind, charming young friend too," he added, with sudden recollection, after which, having carefully placed the ladies in the rockaway and wrapped them well from the weather, the faithful guardian mounted his son's horse and trotted away by their side.

"It is terribly cold, Jerome," whispered Monica, shivering. "What an admirable idea of yours, bringing that heavy blue blanket for poor Tshah-nee-kah!"

Jerome did not reply. He walked along by her side to the end of the little piazza, from the level of which, as it had no railing, Miss McGregor could easily step upon the path leading close by the clump of cedar-trees.

"Keep your station here in the shadow," she whispered, "away from the light of the parlor window. I will not be long. After I have spoken with The Autumn, we will go directly home; for I doubt Sophie would not be too well pleased to see us make our appearance in company with each other."

"Don't hurry on my account," said Jerome. And, having watched her until she reached the clump of cedars, he turned and glided along the piazza, then down the little gravel path and out of the front gate, with swift and noiseless step; nor did he slacken his pace until he reached his home, stealing through the back door, up the narrow stairway, to his own apartment.

Once only had he spoken on his way. It was when, drawing his breath hard through his set teeth, he had said, in quiet triumph,—

"Elle veut s'apparier avec un gibier Puan! Eh bien! —elle le fera—seulement, ce ne sera pas avec son gentil L'Oiseau Rouge."*

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* She would mate herself with Winnebago game! Very well—she shall do it—only it will not be with her pretty Red Bird.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

MADELEINE and her friend occupied the same apartment. They slept late after their Sainte Fériale merry-making.

When they awoke, it was to see a mass of snow beating against the panes and filling the air with its whirling, eddying gusts.

"Past ten o'clock!" cried Madeleine, looking at her watch as she hurried to dress. "Poor papa!—he has had to take his breakfast alone. I am sorry Cateesh did not call us. I wonder if Monica overslept herself too!"

"You forget that your sister stayed all night at Madame Jarrot's," said her friend.

"True. Poor, dear, lame papa!—what will he think of us all? It was too unfeeling in me not to wake sooner."

When they descended to the parlor, finding that Mr. McGregor had breakfasted, they repaired at once to the library, to inquire after his health.

"I am well—pretty well—that is, better than yesterday," he said, rather hurriedly. He looked grave, and Madeleine feared he might be fancying himself neglected. She began to apologize.

"We were so tired, papa! we danced so many dances! And then the Sainte Fériale parties never do break up early, you know. You must excuse us, please, for being so late."

"Oh, that is nothing,—nothing, my child. You were right to sleep. But where is your sister? Cateesh tells me she was not in her room when she went to make her

fire—that her bed has not been occupied through the night! Was she with you?"

Madeleine explained Monica's having given up her place in the carriage to Madame Tremblay and Miss Thérèse, and that she had remained over-night with her friend Sophie.

"But the carriage could have been sent back for her," said Mr. McGregor, a little impatiently. "She knows my opinions and wishes in such matters,—that I consider my own roof-tree the proper shelter for my children, as long as they are under my care. But go now and get your breakfast, Mallie. Miss Latimer——" Miss Latimer was not there; she had slipped away after the first salutation.

"I wonder papa feels so annoyed," said Madeleine, when she rejoined her friend in the breakfast-room. "He always seems to consider Monica a sufficient guide for her own actions. He very seldom makes even a suggestion in regard to her movements; and at Madame Jarrot's, of all places, what can there be to object to?"

"The Jarrots are your sister's own people, too, are they not? That is, Madame Jarrot is a Winnebago!" said Miss Latimer, inquiringly.

"There may be a remote cross of that tribe, but Madame Jarrot is a Sioux—that is, a métive of that blood. Oh, you could tell by Sophie's regular Grecian face that she is of the Yankton race."

"And the Tremblays?"

"They are Puans—at least Jerome and his brothers and sisters are. The father and step-mother are pure Canadian; they have no Indian blood. By-the-by, we are invited there to-morrow evening—I hope the storm will be over!"

Cateesh, the métive servant-girl, had been coming and

going, with her customary zeal, attending the young ladies, yet with something in her air and manner which led Madeleine to remark, when she had for a moment quitted the room,—

"Really, Grace, our laziness seems to have upset the household. Cateesh is evidently in the dumps. Just observe, when she comes in again, how heavy and forbidding her countenance is. Her complexion, which is never too fair, seems ten shades darker than usual."

The girl returned with a fresh supply of avrignelles,—a kind of fritters inclosing a cake or ball of chopped and seasoned venison. As she placed the dish before her young mistress, she quietly remarked,—

"L'Oiseau Rouge a trépassé!"

"The Red Bird dead?" cried Madeleine, springing up. "Are you certain of it? Who told you? What was the matter with him?"

"Crêve-cœur, je suppose," was the brief reply.

"Poor fellow!" exclaimed Madeleine, her eyes filling with tears. "Yes, his heart was broken. There can be no doubt of it. Ah! that is what was troubling papa—that is the reason he was annoyed at Monica's absence! The Red Bird was her cousin," she explained to Miss Latimer. "Grace, dear, can you find something to amuse you for a little while? I think I will go and sit with papa for an hour or two."

"Oh, don't mind me," said her friend. "I have got to write a full description of last evening's entertainment in my journal, and again in my letter to mamma, in case an express is sent next week. If you make a stranger of me, I shall return immediately to Mrs. Lovel—remember that."

Madeleine again joined her father in the library.

"This is very sad news, sir, about poor Red Bird!" she said.

"Ah! you have heard of it! Yes, very sad. I wish you would send Baptiste for your sister as soon as the storm abates sufficiently."

"Perhaps, as Madame Jarrot is her godmother and the family are all of her own religion, Monica might be more easily consoled by them than by us," Madeleine ventured to observe.

"Perhaps so. I should strive to comfort her," said her father, thoughtfully. "I have always endeavored to make her understand my sympathy, my regret. But either she does not believe my assurances, or she rejects them altogether. Poor girl! her lot in life has been a hard one—not the less so that its most painful features have been, in a measure, of her own fashioning."

He sat for some time looking gloomily into the fire.

Madeleine at length interrupted his reverie with the inquiry,—

"Was the Red Bird long ill? Had he any complaint?"

"Nothing, I fancy, but discouragement, despair. Captivity is so dreadful to one who has been always free as air! And of his captivity he doubtless foresaw no end save an ignominious death."

"But is not the weather beginning just now to lighten up a little? Go to the window, darling, and see if it is going to clear. You had better, upon the whole, send for your sister. Home is certainly the best place for her. It ought to be the most desirable place, all things considered."

The snow gradually grew lighter, then ceased altogether. The chanticleers of the neighborhood mounted the fences and sent forth their cheerful announcement of the return of fair weather. Even before these cheering prognostics Baptiste had been dispatched to Madame Jarrot's with

the carriage and a note from Madeleine requesting her sister, in her father's name, to return.

It seemed a much longer time than was necessary to drive to Madame Jarrot's and back again before the messenger returned with the note, and word that "Miss Monique was not there,—had not been at Madame Jarrot's since she left at the breaking up of the party the night before."

"Perhaps she may have heard this news just as we were leaving, and so went to the priest's house and stayed all night with his sister, Miss Rosalie," suggested Madeleine. "Shall I put on my things, papa, and go there to inquire?"

"No; Miss Monique is not there," said Baptiste. "Miss Sophie got into the calèche with me, and stopped at Le Père St. Vrain's and talked with Miss Rosalie. No Miss Monique there."

"Where did you leave Miss Sophie?" inquired Mr. McGregor, anxiously.

"Miss Sophie made me bring her first to M. Tremblay's, and then to the priest's house, and after that to the magasin, where she stopped and sent me home. I was to tell Miss Madeleine that Miss Sophie would be here presently."

"Sophie might have come here at once, knowing how anxious we would be," said Madeleine.

"Anxious!—yes! What can it mean? Where can your sister have gone? Where did you leave her, my daughter?"

Mr. McGregor, notwithstanding his lameness, could not keep his seat. He was now standing upon the rug, now hobbling to the window to look abroad, now opening the door to listen for any arrival.

"Tell me all about it, when and where you parted."

Madeleine repeated what she had already told, of Monica's proposition that the ladies Tremblay should ride in her stead, saying that she would remain all night with Sophie, and of her standing on the porch, wrapped in her cloak and hood, and watching them off.

"And who was there at the time, besides your sister?"

"I think M. Tremblay was standing by her when we drove off; but it could have been but for a moment, as he overtook us, riding on Jerome's horse, before we had gone more than a couple of rods."

"And was there no one else there?"

"It was all so hurried, and we were so busy huddling Madame Tremblay and Miss Thérèse out of the snow, that I did not take much notice. I think, however, that Jerome Tremblay was there. Yes, he was; for he offered his father his horse, saying that he would walk home."

"Jerome, then, may know something of her whereabout; but then, good heavens! what business is it of his?" said Mr. McGregor. "Send for Logan, instantly. Oh, this lameness! If it had but come at any other time! Hark! there is the knocker! Somebody is coming. Perhaps it is your sister, after all."

"Only that Monica would not knock," said Madeleine, running before Cateesh, to open the door.

"Ah, Sophie," she cried, "have you brought us any news?"

Sophie only shook her head, and looked mysterious, as Madeleine hastened to usher her into her father's presence. She had already dispatched Baptiste with the message to the bourgeois.

"Nobody seen her since last night? What can that mean? Monica is not a person to do any thing desperate, —even if she had reason," he added, correcting himself.

"My darling, do not distress yourself. Who would

harm your sister? All her own people are devoted to her. The uncertainty is not comfortable; but we shall find where she is as soon as Logan comes. He will find out all about it. What does M. Tremblay—what does Jerome say?"

"They both say that they parted with dear Monique on our porch; that she was just turning back to pass the night with us, having given that poor Miss Thérèse her seat in the carriage—so amiable as the dear angel always was!"

Sophie's tone and manner implied that she considered it all over with her friend.

"We had better send to the jail," said Mr. McGregor, abruptly. "It may be that, hearing of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah's illness, she hastened there to minister to his last hours. Mallie, send some one—or stay—I can go myself." And he limped towards the door.

"No, no; it's of no use to go there," said Sophie. "My father was down at the jail early this morning. He was notified and summoned for something about the body. When he came back, he told us Father St. Vrain was there, and Judge Belden and some other men; and he would certainly have mentioned so strange a thing as the poor Monique's being there. Besides, did I not see Father St. Vrain himself, who questioned me?"

Sophie was by this time crying—perhaps at sight of Madeleine's tears, which were flowing fast. It was beginning to be a serious matter. Every probable place for Monica to have gone to was suggested, and each in turn proved to be entirely out of the question. She had been on foot, wrapped up for her drive—thus much was known, but no more. Had she a companion? Nobody could tell.

"Jerome seems to have been the last person who spoke

with her," said Sophie, "but it was for only an instant; for though Mr. Logan and Mr. Ewing started off before him, yet he got home only a minute after them. Madame his mamma scolded him for having forgotten to bolt the door, and made him come down the stair to do it."

This was aloud for the benefit of the company; but Sophie then drew a little aside and whispered Miss Latimer,—

"Ah! it is very strange—but the last that was seen of poor, dear Monique was just at the very moment when L'Oiseau Rouge also departed. They were as one in heart and soul, and neither could stay without the other. I have heard my mother and my grandmother say they have known many instances where the lover appeared *en revenant*, and bore away his lady-love with him to the happy land."

"But Miss McGregor is a Christian," objected Miss Latimer. "We can hardly suppose she has gone to a pagan paradise."

Sophie shook her head.

"With the man she loved, she would not be particular. I know this poor, dear Monique so well. She has gone with the Red Bird. Poor soul! poor soul! I believe we shall never set eyes on her again! Depend upon it, they went together. And to think that poor fellow did not wait till just this very day! Did Mr. McGregor hear that the sheriff had given up his place? Yes, indeed! He sent his resignation to the Governor by the very last express, and never told of it till yesterday evening. If L'Oiseau Rouge had only known that there was no one now to hang him, he need not have taken the poison!"

CHAPTER LXXIX.

To those who were so anxiously waiting, the half-hour which elapsed before the bourgeois made his appearance seemed almost interminable.

Madeleine's solicitude would have been augmented by his requesting to see her father alone, if a few whispered words as he was entering the library had not helped to reassure her.

"I think I have news of your daughter, sir," Logan began, as soon as he had closed the door. "She is safe, there is every reason to believe. I waited to get every particular—all, at least, that could be told—before obeying your summons."

"Be quick and tell me all about it! Where is she? How is she? What is the meaning——"

"I had not yet heard that Miss McGregor was missing," said Logan, "when Michaud came to me. 'Is all right with not' gentille demoiselle?' It is thus that he always designates Miss Madeleine. 'All was right,' I said, 'last night. I saw her safe home after the St. Fériale ball at Madame Jarrot's. Why do you ask?' He went on to tell me that Comtois and another half-breed, having been up to the Wisconsin to shoot ducks, had camped near the Rigolet last night, and, the snow coming on, they had taken an early start to return home this morning. Just as they were rounding the point on the western opening of the Rigolet, they came upon a canoe paddled by two Indians. There was a third person in the canoe, as they could just discern through the falling snow. They thought it was a squaw bundled up. They were the first to give

the whoop, when this person, who it appears was a woman, raised herself, put back the blanket that was over her head, and looked forth; upon which one of the Indians quickly drew her down and covered her closely with the blanket in which she was wrapped. Comtois said he saw, by the color of her hands, which were fair and delicate, that it was no squaw. The men both remarked it. If there had been any but Indians in the canoe, and if there had not been this sudden thrusting down the woman and enveloping her in the blanket, they would have supposed it was some trader's wife going to her husband's post up the river. These movements, and the fact that the Indians did not return the whoop cheerily, gave rise to suspicions. Another thing that they both remarked was, that the blanket which was drawn over the woman was a large new blue one, and they knew it could not have belonged to the Indians themselves, unless it had been given to them; for they, as we know, will buy a white, a red, or a green blanket, but rarely a blue one.

"The men called, 'Bon-jour!' and were approaching to salute more particularly, when the Neechees paddled away up the river with rapid strokes, showing that they desired no company. The men set their faces homeward, and got in early in the forenoon; and, regarding what they had seen as suspicious, they at once made inquiries whether any traders' or clerks' wives had gone up the river lately.

"When they found that none had gone, they came with their story to old Michaud, who is a sort of oracle among them."

"And you think it possible that my daughter—one of their own race—has been captured and carried away by these wretches? That seems to me very unlikely."

"To me it seems not only probable, but certain," said the young man, respectfully. "I have long had reason to

believe that the friends of the Red Bird had a plan for possessing themselves of some individual whom they could hold as a hostage for the ransom of these prisoners. Moaway gave me a hint to that effect soon after the surrender of the young chief."

"And you never made it known, or put us on our guard?"

"If you recollect, sir, I did endeavor to awaken your suspicions of mischief being on foot, some weeks since, and measures were then taken for redoubled vigilance. But there is a secret treachery, against which no vigilance can guard."

"True, true—you did endeavor to open my eyes. How blind I have been! But what put it into Michaud's head to associate Madeleine with the mystery of the canoe which the two half-breeds saw?"

"I cannot tell," Logan hesitated. This was a point upon which he could not enlighten the father. "I suppose," he said, after a moment, "that Michaud has no great faith in his friends the Puans. I doubt not his conviction is the same as mine,—that the sister captured is not the one at first designed to be secured."

Mr. McGregor turned pale. "You do not mean to say that you suspect them of designs against my Mallie——"

"I not only suspect, but am sure of it—so much so, that there has not been a night since two weeks before the payment, that a patrol has not been kept around your dwelling, sir, till the light morning hours, to ward off any possible danger."

Mr. McGregor seized the young man's hand and wrung it. "I understand," he said; and for an instant neither spoke.

"But as for Monica's being taken by mistake, how could that possibly be? Her very first word would show them who she was."

"If they allowed her to speak that word," said the young man. "One thing is certain, she is gone. What concerns us now is to follow and bring her back. I had taken the liberty, before receiving your summons, of dispatching Letellier, a capital walker, to Day-kau-ray at the Barribault, apprising him and Kar-ray-mau-nee of the abduction of your daughter; for the moment Ewing informed me that there was a search for Miss McGregor, I understood that the wrong person had been captured. I warned the chiefs in my message of what would happen to their whole nation if the prisoner were not returned forthwith in all safety and honor."

"Thank you, thank you. And now?"

"Now I shall, with your permission, set off at once, in hopes to intercept them at some point on the Wisconsin. The news of the Red Bird's death will travel fast; and, that known, all necessity for a hostage ceases, and the captors, who can be no other than the family of the young chief, will doubtless take the first opportunity of disembarrassing themselves of their charge."

"Yes, if it were only that,—if it were only as a hostage that my poor child was taken," said Mr. McGregor, with a pained expression. "My first thought was, Who would harm her? But now I begin to fear some deep scheme. I recognize a woman's hand in this. Yet pardon me,—these are things which you cannot understand. Do you say that you are ready to go to her rescue? God bless you! God in heaven will bless you! Bring me back my child in safety, and, if a father's gratitude can find fitting reward——but, oh, lose no time. You do not know so well as I what demons there are among them."

"I am ready to set out at once," said Logan, cheerfully. "I must be furnished with a good horse and saddle for Miss McGregor. I have already engaged Médore Jarrot's

fine traveller for myself. The kind young fellow would have gone with me; but I prefer to take only Michaud, to whom I am accustomed, as guide and scout, and Bénoit as interpreter, with a pack-horse to carry our provisions and such necessaries as Miss Madeleine will furnish me for her sister's comfort."

"Go, then, and find Mallie, and tell her as much as you think best of what you have told me. Ask her to provide you with an outfit for her poor sister. Would not the journey back be made with greater ease in a canoe?" said the father, anxiously.

"With the thermometer as it has stood to-day, we should be in danger of being arrested by ice in the Wisconsin."

"True! true! You have calculated all the chances, I see. Well, Monica is an experienced horsewoman; she will stand, the journey when she has hope to cheer her. How soon do you think we may look for your return?"

"If I have to go all the way to the Barribault, we cannot be back before the fourth day, let us travel our best. But if we overtake the party at some nearer point on the river, of course our journey will be proportionably shorter. Depend upon our using all possible dispatch. And now farewell, sir. Keep up a good courage—Michaud will have all things in readiness in an hour's time."

Mr. McGregor rang the bell, which was answered by Madeleine, who had been walking up and down in the hall in a state of painful suspense, notwithstanding the partial relief Logan's hurried words had given her.

Her father hastily explained to her their suspicions, and the plans of the bourgeois. Her anxious look towards him was not lost upon Mr. McGregor. She said not a word, however, as she hastened to give Baptiste the order to saddle "Duke," her sister's favorite horse, and take it to the magasin to old Michaud.

It is probable that while arranging with the bourgeois the outfit for her sister's comfort some words of good cheer were let fall, for she looked less pale and care-worn when she again rejoined her friend Grace than she had done earlier in the day.

"You have, of course, carte blanche as to *porches*, bear-skins, blankets, and whatever else you may think proper to take from the magasin," were Mr. McGregor's last words.

"That was well understood; and as Michaud, with Madame Amelle at his command, understands providing for the well-being of travellers, you may be perfectly easy upon the score of Miss McGregor's comfort, so far as our efforts are concerned."

"I *am* perfectly easy—I feel that everything is being done that can be done. God speed you, and God reward you!" And with these words, and a warm clasp of the hand, both father and daughter bade the bourgeois farewell.

Logan had an errand to the magasin, quite aside from the business of selecting appliances for making his journey comfortable. On entering the retail store, he walked straight up to the young clerk in charge, who was seated at his desk.

"Let me look at your day-book, if you please, Gautier," he said.

The young man looked up, alarmed at something in the tone.

"Anything wrong about my accounts, Monsieur Mark?" he asked.

"Oh, no," said the bourgeois, with a smile. "Only, I like to examine for myself, now and then, how matters are going."

He turned over a few pages of the more recent entries.

"Ah!" he said, "Jerome is going to treat himself to a new capote, is he? Four-point—blue—that is exactly what I want."

"It was the last of the bale," said Gautier; "but I can call Pierre to go up with me and bring down another bale."

"'Pas besoin; I will borrow Jerome's, and you can get him out another." He passed into the larger warehouse.

Jerome sat there, pretending to write, but he was, in fact, wrapped in profound meditation, as he leaned his head upon his hand.

"Will you let me have your new blue blanket?" Logan said. "I am somewhat pressed for time, and there are none unpacked in the magasin."

The métif's countenance grew visibly darker.

"My blue blanket? I have none—that is, I am afraid I have lost it."

"You had it with you last evening, I observed," said Logan, fixing his eye upon him.

"Yes," said Jerome, without losing his self-possession, "and it may have been left at M. Jarrot's. I did not ride home, you remember—I gave my horse to my father, and he did not bring the blanket home, I find. I must send to M. Jarrot's and see if it has been left there."

"If you happen to be unsuccessful," said the bourgeois, "we are just setting off in search of Miss McGregor, and we may have the good fortune to find your blanket for you at the same time."

And, turning upon his heel, Logan quitted the warehouse, leaving the young métif glaring after him in troubled amazement.

CHAPTER LXXX.

THE weather continued bitterly cold after Logan's departure,—a circumstance that aggravated the unhappiness which the thoughts of Monica's sufferings and exposure caused to those at home. Miss Latimer, with her characteristic discretion, insisted on passing her days with Mrs. Lovel, thus leaving Madeleine free to devote every hour to the comfort of her father.

Her return at evening brought a glow of something akin to cheerfulness, for she had always a fund of new and amusing details, every character in the garrison seeming to be either an original whose sayings and doings were worth chronicling, or else a person whose life had been so full of adventure that the narratives with which the young visitor had been entertained were more like the pages of a romance than like sober reality.

The quiet Sunday came. It was passed as usual, the morning in the library, where Mr. McGregor went through with them a portion of the Church service, followed by a sermon of Bishop Horne, "Daniel in Babylon." It was comforting to Madeleine, for she said to herself,—

"Monica is so pious, so devoted to her religion, that 'the God whom she serves, He will deliver her.'" And then she thought with satisfaction of the earthly instrument by whose hands that deliverance would, in all probability, be accomplished.

Late in the afternoon they were startled by the sudden and laconic announcement of their customary herald, Cateesh,—"Un bateau à vapeur, là-bas!"

"A steamboat? Of course it is the Astor. She is the last one, I believe, that is expected before navigation closes. Now we shall have letters, Mallie."

Madeleine was already at the window, and her father followed as well as he was able.

"I wonder if she brings passengers?" he said. "My daughter, I think I feel a good deal better to-day. It will not hurt me to go down to the boat and learn what news she brings, or if there have strangers, or possibly friends, arrived. Ask Baptiste, will you, to bring round the calèche?"

"Ah, papa," remonstrated Madeleine, "if you go down, you will stand about upon the cold ground or damp decks, and make yourself sick and lame again!"

"Nonsense, my darling! I will take the best of care of myself. Do you think I am such a foolish old fellow as to be courting a return of the enemy I am just getting rid of? But I have really been doubting for the last two days whether it were wise to sit mewed up within-doors, day after day. Give me my blanket coat and my buffalo shoes; then, with my raccoon cap and the nice warm comforter you have knit me, I think I may bid defiance to the blasts of old Boreas."

Mr. McGregor wrapped himself up and departed, leaving Madeleine to her musings on her absent sister, as well as on the one who had gone with but "a corporal's guard" into the heart of a country which, as it appeared, was still that of the enemy.

"He is so daring, so forgetful of himself! Oh, it was a terrible risk! And yet I would not have had him shrink from it. How sad that Monica would never be his friend! When she sees what he has undertaken for her, she will regret that she has so undervalued him!" In ponderings like these, not unmixed with occasional tears, the hours

passed by till she heard again the wheels of the calèche rolling over the frozen ground and stopping at the front gate. It was nearly dusk, yet she could discern two figures alighting from the vehicle.

"A gentleman with papa! Some stranger come in the boat. What can a traveller be doing here, at this time of the year? Who can it be?"

It was not until her father ushered in his guest that her astonishment was at its height.

"Mr. Lindsay!" she exclaimed, without power to utter another word.

"Yes, my dear," said that gentleman, coming forward, and unbending from what seemed a habitual stateliness as he drew her towards him and kissed her affectionately, "it is even I; and truly am I grieved to meet my friend's family under such afflicting circumstances. I had hoped that I was the only mark for such a dart——"

He stopped short; and whether it was the troubled look he cast upon her, or whether his words awakened anew the train of thought that had been for a moment suspended, Madeleine gave way entirely, and, sinking into a chair, covered her face with her hands and wept unrestrainedly.

"Do not cry, do not cry, my dear," said Mr. Lindsay, taking her hand again. "You, at least, have nothing to reproach yourself with;"—an address at which Mr. McGregor was quite mystified.

"Madeleine's nerves are a good deal shaken with the events of the last few days," he said. "She has usually a good share of self-control; but these late events have naturally somewhat upset her. Go now to your friend Grace for a while, my daughter; and, when you are a little composed, order a good fire in Mr. Lindsay's room, and see that Josette gives us something nice and hot for

supper. We must not forget that our friend has had only traveller's fare for the last few days."

As Madeleine left the room, Mr. Lindsay looked after her tenderly.

"How can I ever forgive myself," he cried, in a tone of compunction, "for all the misery my insensate pride has occasioned those two young hearts? Angus, your presence, the tone of your voice, seems to thaw away the icy crust which worldly prosperity had heaped over my better feelings. I must confess, and ask forgiveness."

Mr. McGregor turned on his friend an inquiring look.

"I do not understand you," he said.

"Do you mean to say," exclaimed Mr. Lindsay, "that you are not aware of my tyrannical interference to break up the attachment between my son and your daughter?—how I commanded him to give her up, and because he would not, *could* not yield, I madly drove him from me?"

"I was aware that you and your son had had a disagreement—your own letter to me implied as much," said his host. "But for my daughter's being in any way concerned in the matter, this is the first time I have heard a suggestion of the kind; and pardon me for saying that you deceive yourself in imagining there was such an attachment as you speak of, on her part."

"Is it wounded pride that impels you to say that? Is it to rebuke and mortify my egregious folly, that you deny your daughter's attachment to my son?" asked Mr. Lindsay.

"Not at all," said Mr. McGregor, calmly. "I tell you what I know to be the truth. That Madeleine has a warm, a very warm, friendship for both your children—for Malcolm as well as for Clara—I do not pretend to deny. I cannot, of course, understand your objection to her as a wife for your son, had such a union been the wish of

both; but I say it to relieve your mind from any remorse as far as she is concerned, that Madeleine has no sentiment warmer than that of sisterly affection for your son. So far from it, the watchful, scrutinizing observation of the last two months has convinced me that her heart is given in quite another direction."

"To another?" cried Mr. Lindsay, in a self-accusing tone. "Then have I indeed, by my ambition and self-will, shattered my poor boy's hopes for life! For Madeleine did love him—at least he believed so—and the treasure of her affection was more to him, as he showed, than all the world beside."

In his nervous excitement, Mr. Lindsay rose and paced the room; then, suddenly stopping before Mr. McGregor, he said, more calmly,—

"I cannot but feel persuaded that you are mistaken as to your daughter's preference for another. There may have sprung up some fancy, some temporary fascination, to which she may have yielded in the conviction that former sentiments must be forgotten,—a momentary preference, perhaps, for the pomp and circumstance of military life."

Mr. McGregor shook his head.

"It is no young militaire," he said. "I shall possibly lay myself open to your scorn," he added, a little loftily, "when I tell you that the object of my daughter's choice, and, although neither he nor she suspects it, of mine also, is simply a young man in the employ of the Company—the same who has, as I told you, so nobly volunteered to go into the heart of a hostile country to rescue and bring back to us our poor Monica."

Mr. Lindsay was silent a moment from astonishment; then, with a look as if still incredulous, he ejaculated,—

"A clerk! an employé! Angus, have you forgotten all your early traditions? Would you give your daughter

to such a one, rather than to the son of your old friend?"

"That is a question that has never till this moment been presented me," replied Mr. McGregor.

"I feel the implied reproach," said Mr. Lindsay, "and I owe it to you to explain the grounds of the objection which, as I have admitted, once had weight with me. Remember, I undertake to explain, not to *defend* them. But even that I cannot do at this moment; I must have a little time to recover from the shock these assurances of yours have conveyed. I came out with such different hopes. I had called to aid all my philosophy, and I had conquered prejudices which I once thought insurmountable——"

Mr. McGregor's brow contracted slightly. Without noticing it, Mr. Lindsay went on:—

"I had gained, as I thought, reliable intelligence about my boy. Choteau had written me that he had passed through St. Louis, en route for the hunting-grounds on the Upper Mississippi; but it was not enough for me to take the information as I received it. Conscience, and Clara's pale face, constantly upbraided me, and I said at length to myself, 'He will keep Madeleine apprised of his whereabouts. It is useless for me to try to summon him home. I will go to him; I will make him and the beloved of his heart happy; they shall see that I am no detestable tyrant, after all.' This is what I planned; and now with what tidings am I met!"

Mr. Lindsay seated himself, and for some minutes looked gloomily into the fire, neither he nor his companion breaking the silence. At length he said, suddenly,—

"But you have not told me the name of your intended son-in-law."

"His name is Logan—Mark Logan."

"Is he of this place?"

"No; he tells me he is by birth an Irishman, but reared in Canada."

"Oh, I know the family, I dare say. Fergus Logan, of Little York, doubtless, for it is not a common name in Canada. This family, however, though Irish, were originally Scotch, I think. Excellent people! And they had some fine boys, I remember. One of them was a college friend of Malcolm's, and spent a vacation once with us. Your daughter must have seen him there. It could hardly have been this one, I suppose, or she would have mentioned the acquaintance to you."

"She met him at your house?" said Mr. McGregor, musing. "The little puss! Was your son's friend named Mark?"

"I think they called him Jack—yes, his name was John. It might have been John M., for aught I know."

"Whatever his name or lineage, he is a thorough gentleman, and a man of sterling principles," said Mr. McGregor, "and, fastidious as I am, I do not feel that I shall be running a risk in giving my daughter to him whenever he shall venture to ask for her."

Mr. Lindsay again sat and mused until tea was announced.

When the evening meal was over, Mr. McGregor invited his guest to the library, hoping by a cigar and flow of conversation upon subjects unconnected with his own immediate sources of trouble, to banish something of the gloom which Madeleine's presence seemed only to deepen.

Too courteous or too indifferent to manifest the slightest annoyance at the turn the conversation had previously taken, he, as a hospitable host,

"Tried his legendary store,"

though to "gaily press and smile" was beyond his power.

But the current topics of the day—the welfare of old friends—the march of improvement in his Majesty's dominions, all failed to divert Mr. Lindsay from his one engrossing theme.

"I told you," he presently said, "that I would explain the objection which existed, on my part, to the union on which our children had set—that is, upon which I had reason to believe they had set—their hearts."

Mr. McGregor took his cigar from his mouth, and, without proffering a word, listened with an air of such polite attention that his guest found it a little difficult to proceed.

"You cannot think, my old friend—the friend of my boyhood," he said, with a deprecating air, "that an alliance with your family would, of itself, have met any objection on my part——"

"No," said Mr. McGregor, calmly; "I cannot say that such an idea would have occurred to me."

"And I am sure I need not add that, as regards your daughter, I feel that any father might be proud to claim her for his son."

"I quite agree with you," was Mr. McGregor's quiet response.

"People did me great injustice when they ascribed my opposition to ambition. No sentiments of that nature influenced me,—not in the least." He paused and looked at Mr. McGregor, as if hoping that, by a question, he would help him out of a position that was becoming somewhat awkward.

His friend, however, only relighted his cigar, which had gone out while he listened, and tranquilly recommenced smoking.

"I see I may as well make a clean breast of it, even at the risk of offending," said Mr. Lindsay, coming to the point. "You have perhaps by this time divined that, if

the objection was neither in father nor in daughter, it could lie but in one direction—the maternal descent. Forgive me, Angus—I make my full confession—I throw myself penitently upon your mercy—yes, *penitently*—for the consequences of my opposition bring dire remorse. I did oppose my son's attachment to the utmost. I could not tolerate the thought of that Puan blood in my grandchildren. If it had been any other tribe,—Chippewa, Ottawa, Sioux,—I persuaded myself that I should not have given it such thought—but Puan! I have sometimes looked at your sweet Madeleine and felt convinced that it was impossible she could have any affinity with that stock."

"A most natural conclusion," remarked Mr. McGregor.

"I do not understand you," said Mr. Lindsay, replying more to the manner than to the words.

"I mean that your persuasions were correct—that Madeleine has no affinity with that stock."

"What do you tell me? Not a métive? Nor your eldest daughter, neither?"

"Yes, Monica has Winnebago blood."

"Then was her mother not your wife?"

"Pardon me—she was."

Mr. Lindsay's countenance fell. "And the dear unhappy Madeleine, then, was——"

"Madeleine was the daughter of my lawful, wedded wife."

"You speak in enigmas. I am aware that you became a widower two years ago, while your youngest daughter was under my charge; and I know, from what I have heard the dear child innocently describe, that her sister Monica was the cherished child of this mother, who wore the native costume and spoke the native language. How am I to understand this? I am quite bewildered!"

"Then, if you will listen to a tolerably long story, I will

explain to you what seems so incomprehensible. But let me first offer you a glass of wine—I may require one myself to carry me with composure through a narration that I have written out, at some length, for the perusal of my darling Mallie some day, but which I shall endeavor to give you in more succinct form."

Both gentlemen drew their chairs closer to the fire, and Mr. McGregor, after having placed upon the table a decanter and a couple of glasses, thus began.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

"I NEED not go back to the time when you and I together left our native hills to seek fortune in the New World,—you, to be set forward in your career by the kind and generous uncle, whose declared heir you were; I, escaping from a life of indolent dependence under the roof of the relative whose pride was unappeasably wounded by the determination of a McGregor to carve out his fortune, not with the sword, as the adventurers of his clan had hitherto done, but rather with the peaceful implements of commercial or agricultural life.

"I came to the Colonies, as you will remember, full of hope and enthusiasm. The most brilliant pictures of what I was to achieve in conquering an adverse fortune and becoming in time a second 'Man of Uz,' a territorial grandee, of whom other and more aristocratic McGregors might hear, and of whose alliance by blood they might boast, were dancing before my mental vision.

"That I chose a different though perhaps less am-

bitious path was, as you know, owing to the influence kindly exerted by your uncle to procure me a place along with yourself in the North-Western Fur Company's establishment. I cannot say that the fervor of my expectations was even then abated. I stood ready to catch at the first opening for a more adventurous sphere of duty; and when the opportunity was at length offered me of taking charge of certain of the remote interests of the Company, I truly believe that never did Spanish or Portuguese navigator set forth with more buoyant hopes than cheered me on to the land of romance, the magnificent lakes and rivers and hunting-grounds of the far Northwest. It was no small encouragement to me that the qualities which had enabled me to overcome the disadvantages of my early training were considered by my superiors to fit me for a position of considerable responsibility,—the charge, that is, of some their most important outposts.

"To fulfil the duties assigned me, it would be necessary, it is true, to take up my residence, perhaps for a long season, in the heart of the Indian country; but what of that? My only sorrow was in sundering the ties that bound me to you, my only fast friend. If I was to leave you, it mattered little what were to be my surroundings for the time which should elapse before we were restored again to each other."

"The greater grief and mortification were on *my* side," said Mr. Lindsay. "I longed so passionately to go with you, but, to my chagrin, was pronounced unfit for the service."

"Your uncle's doings, Archie, to keep you near him," said his friend. "Well, I came to the Indian country. As we kept up, during the first two years of my sojourn, such correspondence as circumstances would permit, and as I constantly and minutely reported to head-quarters all my doings, you were kept posted in regard to me during that

time, and are therefore aware that my station for a long season was upon the Upper Mississippi, within the Winnebago territory, yet bordering upon the Chippewas. A life more isolated, more shut out from communion with those who could be termed companions, you can hardly imagine, unless you fancy one on Robinson Crusoe's island. Occasionally, though rarely, I came down at the holiday season to this place, or at still longer intervals I made business trips to St. Louis. The remainder of the time I attended to my men, received the furs and peltries from the traders and trappers of more distant regions, superintended the transportation of outfits and received the incoming commodities, or I read and re-read the few books I had, wrote, hunted, and played the grand seigneur to the different tribes, who looked up to me with reverential affection.

"My progress towards the goal at which I aimed was, as I had foreseen, slow; yet I was, for a time, wholly contented. I knew that I was successfully fulfilling the duties assigned to me, and that not a step of mine in the right direction would be lost.

"Yet, notwithstanding this conviction," pursued Mr. McGregor, "I became, after a time, discontented. My lonely life began to be irksome to me; I felt the want of companionship. Parted from you, the only intimate friend of my loveless boyhood and youth, I sighed for some one to take the part you had done in my joys and my sorrows. I had learned, while in Montreal, to speak the Chippewa language pretty well, but I could not master the Winnebago. No white man had ever learned it, except so far as to furnish himself with the meagre vocabulary of names and numbers necessary for trading or expressing their simplest wants. I could hardly call the feeling which came over me a longing for society, for to that I had been so unac-

customed that, as you may remember, in Montreal I never cared to avail myself of the occasions offered me of mingling with the young and gay.

"Whatever was the cause, I was sensible of a yearning, desolate, homesick feeling, that at times almost prostrated me.

"It was while I was in this state that one of the principal chiefs of the tribe came to bring in his packs of furs, and, as a matter of course, to make me a visit of ceremony. When we had smoked together, he began commenting on my changed and listless manner. Perhaps it was not the first time he had noticed it; and he may have laid his plans accordingly.

"He told me that I wanted somebody to comfort me; that it was not good for man to be alone,—a truth which the Eternal Wisdom has written on the hearts of its children as well as in the pages of inspiration.

"The chief pointed to the animation and cheerfulness of his young men, assigning as a reason for it that they had each a companion of the gentler sex in the lodge to care for and to comfort him.

"'Shall I bring Nar-zee-kah* some one to make him smile?' he asked. 'I have a daughter, the child of her mother, who was a little Spanish captive brought away long years ago from a settlement on the Missouri. She is more fit for the wife of a white man than for one of our people,' he concluded, with a glowing eulogy. Though, upon the whole, indifferent in the matter, yet the persistence of the chief, his description of the charms and merits of his daughter, and what he told me of her lineage, awakened a feeling of curiosity. To his reiterated inquiry, 'Shall I bring her?' I gave my assent, saying to myself, 'If she

* The Yellow-haired—sometimes spoken with another syllable—Nar-tshoo-zee-kah.

pleases me, I can perhaps teach her to be a companion.' I do not remember that the question, whether I should please *her*, at all entered into my speculations. It seemed a matter of course that she should be transferred to me, if I requested it, the same as if she were a bale of buffalo robes, or any other article of merchandise.

"The chief did not keep me long waiting. After the briefest possible interval, he again made his appearance, bringing with him his daughter and a huge pack of beaver-skins as her dowry. The young girl was all that her father had vaunted. She was radiant with a beauty partaking largely of that of her mother's race, yet combined with the noble features of her father, who was an uncommonly fine specimen of a tribe of which the men are, as a rule, magnificent. Unconsciously I found myself striving to please her and to win her regards, using the most pleasant phrases I could compass in Chippewa, which language she, like most of her tribe who live upon the northern borders, spoke passably well.

"I succeeded to such a degree that after a few days she expressed, somewhat coyly, her willingness to remain with me, and she was formally bestowed upon me by her father, whom, with a hearty good will, I loaded with presents in return for his daughter.

"I do not think I wrote you often during those days, Archie?"

"No," said Mr. Lindsay; "a year would often elapse without bringing a line from you, except your reports to the heads of department. You had perhaps learned that I went home to Scotland, and remained for a considerable length of time after my uncle's death, and that I married during that period?"

"Yes, I heard of it; and it sometimes occurred to me that I had better apprise you of my having taken a like step;

but, somehow, when the moment came, I shrank from acquainting you with the fact. I put off the task, and finally omitted it altogether. To proceed.

"I found the truth of that which the old man had averred. It did indeed add to my contentment to have in my home some one to love and cherish me. Española was very affectionate. Her pretty, graceful ways pleased me. She understood the art of being an admirable wife in all particulars save one,—she was naturally of a jealous temper; and this unhappy trait she took no pains to overcome. Its prominence would have avouched her Iberian descent, even had there been no tradition to attest the fact.

"If I occupied myself in reading, it was 'because she was felt to be no fit companion for me.' If I looked over my accounts, and, while verifying some calculation, a shade of thought or perplexity crossed my brow, it was that 'I was sending word to my friends how I longed to be with them, instead of with her, who was so unlike them.' I would read her stories from my books, from the best Book, translating them into Chippewa for her comprehension; then I would encourage her to learn the letters and take the first step in pronouncing the English words, that she might read for herself.

"'Ah, you should not have taken me, wild and ignorant,' she would exclaim; 'you can love nothing that is not like your own people!' I sometimes thought she was in reality longing to improve her knowledge in the ways of civilized life, but perversely refrained because she wished me to be content with her as she was.

"If there had been a profound sentiment in my affection for my poor little wife, I should have been very wretched; as it was, I was only vexed and annoyed, as one will be with an unreasonable child. I did not, however, relax in my efforts to please her. Because she tormented herself

with the fancy that I was happiest when away from her, I went as seldom as I conscientiously could to visit my outposts. As for hunting, or other field exercises, I gave them up altogether."

"You indulged her too much,—there was the difficulty," remarked Mr. Lindsay.

"Perhaps so," said his friend. "At length it suggested itself to me that a change of abode might vary the current of Española's thoughts, and, as I had for some time been contemplating the transfer of my head-quarters to a position more central, I proposed to her that we should go and live near some of her father's relatives at the Four Lakes villages.

"I had already a trading establishment in that neighborhood, and although this change would necessitate longer journeys for me whenever I went to inspect my distant posts, yet the inconvenience would be more than counterbalanced by the satisfaction of having her within visiting-distance of the friends she loved. This change of abode we accordingly made. We lived more tranquilly in our new home, and it was here that our daughter Monica was born.

"For some months, the pride and delight which Española took in her infant seemed to chase away every dark shadow. To her great satisfaction, it was a small and delicate child, not the stout, overgrown baby which civilized mothers, to the utter astonishment of their aboriginal sisters, exhibit with so much pride and complacency.

"I was now permitted to hunt or journey as occasion required, the little one supplying my place in the mother's affections and attentions. Taking advantage of this liberty to make an excursion to the post of one of my traders at the Koshkonong, I was there told of a white child that had for some time past been held a prisoner

among the Pottowattamies of Big Foot Lake. The story McCann, my head clerk, had received was, that this child had been stolen and brought away from Kentucky some years previous by a party of Indians who had been South on a visit to the Cherokees, as after-events showed, with a hope of inducing them to join in a general league of the different tribes to make war upon the whites. Robineau, one of my engagés, who had been to Big Foot's village to visit the family of his Pottowattamie wife, had brought this piece of news to McCann, and he had further added that there had been two children captured, but one had died, and that the survivor, a girl now of some twelve or fourteen years old, had never forgotten her home or ceased to mourn for her parents and lost brother.

"I had no trading-posts among the Pottowattamies—their domain belonging to the head-quarters at the newly-established post of Chicago; but I commissioned Robineau to return with his wife to her people, and to sound Mauchsuck, or Big Foot, the chief, to ascertain whether he would release his prisoner, authorizing him to offer whatever was reasonable for her ransom.

"When McCann next came in, he reported that Robineau had been unsuccessful in his mission. Big Foot would listen to no proposal of giving up the little girl, who was represented by Madame Robineau as more than ever pining and unhappy. My next step was to send McCann himself as ambassador, but with no better success. I then resolved to go myself and open a negotiation for the ransom of the unfortunate child.

"I could not, in conscience, allow a girl of that age to remain against her will, with the ultimate fate of becoming the wife, or rather the property, of some young red-skin, and doing menial service in his lodge.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

"I PRESUMED too much on Española's restored amiability when I fancied that she would approve the duty I was about to undertake.

"She gave it as her opinion that I should rather content myself with sending again and again, till I had teased Mauch-suck into compliance.

"'And what was I going to do with the little one? Not bring her into our home, to be always at hand for me to talk with in my own language, while she would be shut out from any share in the conversation! No—there must be no such arrangement, unless I wished to send her away from me altogether—perhaps bite off her nose in the first place, as a mark of her disgrace!'

"It was of no use to reason with Española; to encourage her to begin learning English, that she might talk with the little girl in that language; to point out to her that at present the child understood only the Pottowattamie dialect, which is almost identical with the Chippewa, our ordinary medium of communication with each other.

"As little did it avail to set before her the Christian duty of rescuing the captive and striving to make her happy. 'Española was no Christian; she did not understand her duty in that way. She had, herself, been very happy in an Indian lodge, when of the same age; what should prevent this child from being happy as well? Besides, she was not a prisoner. She was, in fact, a relative, adopted into the family of Mauch-suck. Why should she be brought away to live among strangers?'

"I had to compromise matters, by engaging, in case I should succeed in ransoming the little girl, to leave her for the present with Mrs. McCann, the wife of my trader, a very kind and motherly woman, who, with Madame Robineau, would, I knew, take the kindest care of their little charge. I might, by some means, obtain a clue to her family and restore her to them, or, if not, I could in process of time doubtless find some eligible home for her.

"I made the journey to Big Foot's village, and, by the offer of horses and other valuable presents, I accomplished, after some difficulty, the object I had in view. I should have hesitated at nothing within reach of my resources, for the captive was by no means of the tender age she had been represented; she was old enough to appreciate all the horrors of her position.

"She had been with these people long enough to have forgotten her native tongue; yet the joyful lighting up of her pensive countenance, as I addressed her in the accents of her childhood, and her plaintive cry of 'mamma, mamma,' as she held out both hands to me, showed me how deeply the memory of her home was engraved.

"I did not think it wise to question her much in the presence of her guardians, but I had no difficulty in soon learning from her all that she could recall.

"Willie, the brother who had been captured with her, was, naturally, the prominent image in her memory; next came the mother, of whom she retained a tolerably vivid recollection. Of her father and another brother her impressions were more indistinct, but the baby she remembered with still surviving tenderness. She preserved a faint recollection of her home—a large house, with many trees and flowers growing near; also of many people, dark in color like the Indians, with one of whom she and her

brother were walking when they were seized and borne away.

"This last circumstance and the hardships of her journey seemed to have made an indelible impression upon her. She and Willie had always, when together, talked of all these things, and helped each other to remember, till Willie was taken sick and died. By degrees, however, almost all the events of her childhood had faded away, leaving but here and there a trace, as of a dream. Some things, apparently trifling, she remembered, as, for instance, a little boy upsetting a candle against her, setting her sleeve on fire and burning her shoulder, the mark of which was still visible in an unsightly scar. These snatches were told me in the Pottowattamie dialect. She could not remember the name of her father, but her own she had preserved. It was Madie. Willie, who was the elder of the two, had always called her so, and the Indian children had adopted it from him.

"It was singular and interesting to observe, afterwards, how the names of different objects, once familiar but long forgotten, came back to her, even under the disadvantage of Mrs. McCann's broad Scotch pronunciation.

"The story I gleaned from Big Foot was, that the two children had been captured by the Kickapoos and kept by them some two or three years; that on a rumor of white people having come into the country, below the Kankakee, in search of them, fearing to have them found in their hands, lest they should be punished for an infraction of the treaty of Greenville, they had brought them still farther north, and presented them to the chief Mauch-suck. They probably knew him to be a man evil and cunning enough to hold his own against white man or red.

"This second change in their surroundings and language had probably helped to obliterate many recollections which,

under other circumstances, would have stood the test of the years that had elapsed since their abduction.

"The poor child had formed no strong attachment to the people with whom she had been placed, neither the chief nor his family possessing the qualities which would inspire affection. She went with me gladly, and I had soon the satisfaction of seeing her installed in the comfortable little log cabin of Mrs. McCann, at Koshkonong.

"As the Pottowattamies had not sufficient geographical knowledge to identify the locality whence the children had been brought, all that they knew being simply that they were taken on the return of a party 'from the Cherokee country,' which might mean Kentucky, Tennessee, or even Georgia, there seemed little hope of my being able to trace out the home of this young girl and restore her to her friends. The only step I could think of as likely to be available was to write to the commanding officer at the military post at Chicago, giving him all the facts in the case, and begging him to make them known as extensively as possible among his brother officers, many of whom were, of course, from the South. Tidings might thus, in time, possibly reach the ears of those who had a right to reclaim my young protégée.

"It was not many months after I had placed Madie (for by this name she continued to be known) under the care and instruction of Mrs. McCann, who, having received a very tolerable education, was quite fitted for the charge, when I was summoned away from my home and my family for a time.

"A new organization of the Company being in contemplation, my presence in Montreal was indispensable. You remember this visit, Archibald, and the important change in my subsequent position that it led to?"

"Yes, Angus, I remember. Malcolm had at this time

become one of us. He seemed to have been sent to fill up the gap your absence had made; and yet he never quite made good your place."

"No—that was hardly to be expected. We two had loved each other as boys, and I will not pretend to describe the joy I felt at the prospect of seeing you again.

"Española wished much to accompany me; but, for various reasons, I did not think this advisable, and my opposition to her wishes aggravated, in no small degree, her habitual feelings of discontent.

"'I was ashamed of her,' she insisted, 'and did not wish to present her to my friends. I wished to leave her and enjoy again the pleasures of my young man's life, forgetful of her and our child. Perhaps, indeed, I meditated breaking the bond and staying away altogether! Such things were not unheard of.'

"It was in vain that I reminded her that I had no relatives to present her to,—no one to whose house I had a right to take her as a visitor; that the journey would be long, and full of hardship and exposure for her and the little girl; that after having made it she would find herself out of place in a boarding-house, among people with whom she could communicate only by signs; that my time would necessarily have to be given to the Company and its concerns, so that she would scarcely see me at all; finally, that I could not afford the expense, the Company having made no provision for my bringing my family with me. None of my arguments carried conviction to the mind of my jealous little wife, and, as I remained firm, I was forced to leave her moody and sullen,—so much so, that she would not take leave of me when the time came for me to set out, but absented herself until she was certain that I and my guide had actually taken our departure.

"As you will remember, the business that called me to Montreal was not adjusted in as short a time as we had anticipated, its concerns being involved in a system extending over all the vast range of interests which were at that day tributary to the gigantic parent establishment.

"I was delayed many months; indeed, at one time I was afraid I should have been detained from my family the whole winter.

"My task was at length finished, and I was able to set out on my homeward journey. I had received no letters during my absence,—a circumstance I easily explained by recalling the uncertainties of communication, the rather procrastinating habits of old Bayne, the clerk to whom my own letters and messages for my family had, in my absence, been addressed, together with the fact that almost from the first I had written as if the present month would be the last of my detention.

"Confiding in Española's passionate affection for me, I had never doubted that calm reflection would, long ere this, have banished all feelings of discontent, and that she would receive me with a cordial and smiling welcome on my return.

"Judge, then, of my astonishment and indignation when, on reaching home, late on a snowy November day, I learned that my wife was no longer there; that she had quitted my roof for a visit to the Four Lakes, immediately after my departure; that subsequently she had gone to Koshkonong and quietly taken information from the Indian wife of Robineau of all that could be imparted touching my visits first to Big Foot's village and afterwards to Koshkonong, satisfying at the same time her curiosity in regard to the personal endowments and qualities of the young girl, whom she had not hitherto seen.

"'I did not like the gleam of her eye as she looked

under her brow at our Miss Madie,' had been a part of McCann's communication to Bayne. 'Ye'll pardon me for mentioning it,' said the old man, in repeating it to me. 'Of course, I made light of it to McCann, but I thought it the proper thing to sit down and write you about it; also, that Madame 'Spañola had made that visit to her relations and had not yet returned.'

"That letter I never received.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

"My first emotions were, as I have said, those of anger towards my wife; for I am not, by nature, of the most patient temper imaginable. After a season of reflection, however, I began to make excuses for her.

"Why should she, after all, have continued at the trading-house, all lonely and forlorn except for the companionship of her child? Those by whom she was surrounded understood too little of her language to hold anything like connected communication with her. Why should she not have gone to solace herself among the friends so near and dear to her? She ought, to be sure, to have remembered that I had intrusted much to her charge, and she should have returned occasionally to look after the interests of her household, if nothing more. She had full authority,—she could have ordered any one of the engagés to drive her in the calèche, which I always kept for our little journeys, the twenty miles which lay between us and the Four Lakes villages, returning for her on any day she might appoint.

"Instead of that, she had walked away one morning, with Monica, now three years old, by the hand, and later in the

day an Indian boy had sauntered into the magasin and quietly given the information that 'Spa-ro-rah' had gone to Tay-tsho-bee-rah.* It was not pleasant to hear that she had afterwards made a journey to Koshkonong for the indulgence of her jealous curiosity.

"But allowances must be made, I told myself, for one so undisciplined, so untrained in the path of duty. I must be tolerant and forbearing with her, not tenacious and exacting.

"I *had a right,* as we say in the old country, to have foreseen the peril of linking myself for life to one upon whose dutiful observances I could have no hold save considerations of affection or expediency. While deliberating upon the subject before resolving to accept the daughter of Haunk-shee-kah for a wife, I had recalled that Major P. and Dr. M., and others of equal prudence and respectability in the upper townships, had chosen similarly. I should not, however, have lost sight of the great fact that the partners of these gentlemen were converted Christians, devout women, whose principles of duty were (perhaps all the more for their unsophisticated training) the governing spring of their conjugal and maternal lives. I, on the contrary, had taken Española, a beautiful, affectionate, captivating heathen; I had asked nothing beyond her personal attractions and loving ways; and now I must make the best of my bargain. That I should ever be the means of winning her to a better faith than her own pagan ideas, I had long ceased to hope. God might provide some way for her conversion; till then, I must bear what was inevitable, and strive, as my conscience told me I had ever hitherto done, to make her happy; and I must find my own happiness in so doing.

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* The Four Lakes.

"Having settled the course I ought to pursue, I took short time to refresh myself after my tedious and trying journey, but, the next day after my return, set out in my calèche for the Four Lakes, at one of the villages of which an Indian who the week before had called to have his musk-rat trap mended, informed Bayne he had seen Nar-zee-kah's wife and child.

"Notwithstanding this assurance, I was haunted throughout my drive by a fear which I was destined to find verified on my arrival at the Lakes. The villages were all deserted,—the inhabitants, even to the veriest old crone, having departed to their wintering grounds. I went from village to village, entering wigwams or prying into such as were fastened. All were empty and swept, and so would remain till the spring.

"To scour the country in search of my missing ones would, I knew, be worse than useless. It would only subject my little Monica to the exposure and hardship of a constant change of asylum, as my pursuit became known, her mother's purpose being evidently to evade my search.

"Española's whole conduct was inexplicable. What could she be planning for the future? Did she suppose I would sit down tamely and give her up, or that I would allow her to keep my child from me? Was she trying me thus, in order to test the strength of my affection for her, perhaps experimenting as to the degree of her ascendency over me?

"A visit from a chief, a relative of her mother's, furnished me an opportunity of communicating with her. The old man was very reticent,—knew nothing of the whereabouts of my family at present, but could ascertain. I made him my ambassador, with injunctions to lose no time in bringing me an answer back.

"My message to Española was that 'I had returned, and had sought her at the Four Lakes without success; that I longed to see her and my little girl, and that I would come with horses, or in a canoe, or in the calèche, according to the nature of the distance that separated us, as soon as I could learn where to join her.'

"The answer I received, after several days, was that 'Española would remain in the lodge of her mother's sister till after the sugar-making. That season past, if Nar-zee-kah wished to learn why she returned to him no more, he could seek his answer on the Upper Mississippi, at the lips of Haunk-shee-kah, her father.'

"My messenger could, or rather *would*, tell me nothing further, save that my wife and child, with her friends, were far, *far* up on the Wisconsin, and that they were going still farther into the beaver country, to trap for the winter.

"From that decision there was no appeal; I was forced to accept it with the best grace I could.

"You may imagine the lonely winter I passed. My resolutions of forbearance more than once gave way, and I raged fearfully over the folly and evil temper of my poor Española. It would have been a recreation to have gone from time to time to Koshkonong and occupied myself in instructing and amusing the pretty and gentle Madie, as we continued to call the young captive; but of this indulgence I debarred myself, not doubting that there were 'liers in wait,' ready to report all my doings to one already only too disposed to misinterpret them.

"Twice only during the winter I visited McCann's trading-house, and had the pleasure of witnessing the progress of our ransomed one, under the conscientious teaching of the faithful Scotswoman. She had learned to read and write in an incredibly short time,—a pretty elementary book that I had brought her in my valise from Montreal

seeming too little advanced for her, while to the truths of the Christian religion her heart, to Mrs. McCann's great joy, seemed to open instinctively. She would have been contented and happy, but for her longing to see again the home of her childhood. I was obliged on each occasion of my visit to disappoint her by telling her I had discovered no traces of her parents or their place of abode, a subject upon which she meditated and discoursed more and more as time rolled on.

"At as early a season as possible in the spring, I repaired to the village of Haunk-shee-kah on the Upper Mississippi. I was far from understanding the message of Española in the light of a menace; I looked upon it as simply promising an explanation.

"There was no want of respect or cordiality in the manner of Haunk-shee-kah when we met. He informed me that his daughter had absented herself from my home, and would continue to do so, because she was not happy as my wife, and because she knew well that I would be secretly glad she had left me. That it was a mistake in her having listened to him and consented to come and live with me at all; that I was a white man, and should have a white wife, for I could never make an Indian of myself, as the French traders found no difficulty in doing. Finally, that as she was not fitted for my wife, so neither was the regular, restricted life under the tie she had so inconsiderately formed, one to which she could accustom herself. That her father, who had made the match, could set us both free again, and she had come to pray him to do so, and to restore her to her unrestrained and favorite mode of life again. Of course, as the matter assumed this serious aspect, and the possibility of my losing my petted companion forced itself upon me, I was disposed to do battle for my rights. I had supposed that she was merely trying

my patience—punishing me, perhaps, for refusing her request to be taken to Montreal; but this looked terribly like earnest.

"'Have I not been a tender and loving husband to your daughter?' I asked.

"'Oh, yes, my daughter does not complain. She says Nar-tshoo-zee-kah is too good; he should have a wife of his own color, his own language, his own religion,—one that he can truly love.'

"'And what will all her tribe say,' I exclaimed, trying a new weapon, 'if your daughter persists in this separation? Why, that Nar-zee-kah has hated the daughter of Haunk-shee-kah and has driven her from him.'

"'No, for all know that Española left of her own accord, while Nar-zee-kah was gone to the Wau-bun.'*

"'And is Española,' I asked, 'prepared to give up her little daughter, or does she propose to rob me of my child also?'

"'Española has talked with Amable, the Wauk-hoa-pee-nee,† who lives among us. He knows the laws of the May-ee-hat-tee-rah.‡ He tells her that her marriage is no marriage to Nar-zee-kah,—that it means no more than the song of a buzzing insect.'

"'If that is all, I can strengthen the tie more fully according to our laws. Let Española come with me, and we will soon repair whatever is deficient in the form of our marriage.'

"'No—Española will not go—she is content as it is.'

"'However,' said I, waxing wroth, 'my child is my own. *Her* at least I can claim—the laws will protect my rights there.'

"'The Wauk-hoa-pee-nee says no. He says Nar-zee-kah

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* The East—the dawn. † Frenchman. ‡ The white man.

was not married according to his country's fashions, therefore he does not own the child. She belongs to her mother.'

"I did not know what was the law upon this point, but it was evident that they had been taking information—that the matter had been discussed in all its bearings—that a settled plan had been marked out, and that upon it my aboriginal relatives had intrenched themselves.

"'And is your daughter,' I cried, 'really resolved to do such wrong to our child as to deprive her of her father's protection, of the advantages of education, of everything, in short, that she ought to be ambitious of securing for her?'

"'Española regards her child's happiness. She sees that she will be far better off among our people, surrounded by many to love her, and in the full enjoyment of all the good gifts that the Great Spirit bestows upon his children. What can civilization give, that will be a compensation for slavery? Española has tried it; her child, she says, shall never try it.'

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

"It was of no avail to plead, to argue, or to threaten. Having tried my powers at all three, without producing the slightest impression, my next step was to invoke the aid of the law. I came with that intent to the prairie, and here I soon learned that Amable, the misnamed Frenchman, who had so busied himself to widen the gulf of separation between my wife and myself, was correct as to the extent of my rights. I could claim my child no more than I could her mother. If the latter declared herself to be no

longer my wife, there was no appeal except to the chief, her father. He alone who had formed the tie could affirm or disannul it. Such was the law of the red man, and to it alone were they amenable.

"As for the child, she belonged to her mother alone. By the laws under which I professed to live, I could have no claim to her—the mother was at perfect liberty to withhold her and set me at defiance. There was nothing left for me but to return to my home wifeless and childless.

"I was the more incensed and grieved at this disruption of all my domestic ties, that I had been perfectly loyal in my affection for Española. Never for a moment had I contemplated the severance of the bond that united us. I had endeavored to add to her happiness by opening to her new sources of improvement and rational enjoyment; failing in that, I had done whatever was in my power to secure to her such indulgences as were to her taste. My love for her, it is true, had not been a spiritual devotion, but it had been of the type to which she was accustomed, and which alone she could appreciate—a sort of fondness which made me most contented when she was near me, and ever ready to be amused by her tricks and pretty ways.

"She had been frequently perverse, but I had never punished her perversity by threatening to bring another wife into the lodge; had I done so, and had I even carried out my threat, I believe she would have hailed it with satisfaction, as a conformity with the usages of her people—provided, always, that the new favorite was one of her own race. It was the idea that my heart was still clinging to my own people and their usages, that had turned her tenderness into indifference and, as it would now seem, into absolute dislike.

"I accepted, as patiently as I could, my divorce, for such, to all intents and purposes, it was, and for the months that

followed I applied myself to such occupations as would best help me to bear the loneliness so unexpectedly and undeservedly made my lot.

"It would have seemed but natural that I should have turned to one obvious source of consolation; but I refrained. I waited a year and a day, as if death itself had snapped the tie which had bound me, before making my first visit to Koshkonong. After that I went very frequently. I cannot enlarge upon this part of my story," said Mr. McGregor. He rose, and, as well as his lameness would permit, took two or three turns up and down the apartment, then poured himself a glass of wine, signing to his friend to do the same.

"Forgive me, Archie," he said, "if I seem a little unhinged. I cannot describe my Madie to you as the lapse of months during which I had not seen her had transformed her. If you look at my Mallie you will see a faint picture of what her mother was. In beauty she is by no means her equal; in childlike sweetness, in archness, in clinging tenderness of manner, there is more of a resemblance.

"How she came to love me as she did, was a marvel to me. I suppose her grateful heart taught her to value me as her deliverer from a fate worse than death, to which was added the sympathy she felt for the wrongs I had suffered in the desertion of Española and her abduction of my child; and, finally, my own passionate devotion awoke an equally fervent sentiment in return. She did not for a moment hesitate when I asked her to become my wife. She seemed, on the contrary, glad that she could devote herself to me —that her life would be spent in ministering to my happiness. When I proposed that we should go on horseback to Chicago, where there was a justice of the peace, who could unite us according to the forms of the English Church, she made no objection. Mrs. McCann accom-

panied us on our journey, which was made in great comfort notwithstanding the lateness of the season. Our short sojourn at that post gave me an opportunity of prosecuting further inquiries to ascertain if any officer had heard of kidnapped children whose circumstances seemed to tally with those of my bride; but we found, to our disappointment, that no such instance had come to the knowledge of any inmate of the garrison or any member of the corps belonging to the Fur Company.

"The two years that followed were the halcyon days of my life. I took up my abode permanently at Koshkonong, intending, as I was now placed in a position where my fortune was accumulating as rapidly as I could expect, that we should in time make our head-quarters in some one of the more important cities either of Canada or the States, my preference being, upon the whole, in favor of the latter.

"We lived in perfect seclusion, my Madie devoting herself to the acquisition of all that I could teach her; her great ambition being to overcome the disadvantages of her captive life, in order, as she would say, to reflect no disgrace on the one who had chosen her for a friend and companion. In the year following our marriage our Madeleine was given to us, and then was the cup of our happiness indeed full.

"But a few more months had elapsed, when a new source of trouble opened for our disturbance. There were growlings and mutterings all along our Indian horizon.

"Doubtless the chiefs of the different tribes were kept better informed than I was, of the misunderstanding and difficulties fomenting between the two great nations, whose interest it would be each to secure these tribes for allies in case of a serious collision. It was this knowledge, probably, which emboldened them to various acts of mischief,

almost amounting to hostility, towards the peaceful settlers on the frontier.

"From my remote and isolated position, I was necessarily but little posted in the details of public affairs; consequently, I for a long time regarded the symptoms of discontent among the savages, to which I could not shut my eyes, as a manifestation of their continued sense of injury at the loss of their splendid country north of the Ohio River by the *compulsory Treaty*, as they termed it, which succeeded the wars of Harmar and Wayne. I knew that this grief had been burning inwardly, like a volcano, ever since, and I was not altogether unprepared for an explosion.

"When the news reached me of the battle of Tippecanoe, I was certain there was a spirit at work that would need chastising, and I could not help feeling some misgivings about what was yet to come. I began more seriously to make my arrangements for a change in my mode of life; and the favorite topic of conversation between my Madie and myself was our future, in which she was to enjoy all of which her peculiarly hard fate had hitherto deprived her.

"Things were in this state, when all former causes of solicitude were lost sight of in a new source of interest. Only a few weeks after we had learned the defeat of Tecumseh, a letter from the commanding officer at Chicago was brought me by a Pottowattamie messenger. It was to the effect that a captain of one of the companies at that post, just returned from furlough, had met, at Pittsburg, an officer of Harrison's command, and that, in speaking of the prowess exhibited by the Kentucky volunteers in the late battle, he had remarked, 'There was one who fought beyond all the dare-devils I ever saw; a fellow named Hartstone, who told me he had had a brother and sister

carried off by the Indians, many years ago, and that he felt he had a mission from Heaven to take the life of every red-skin who fell in his way.' The Chicago officer then mentioned to his new acquaintance the fact of two white children having been found among the Pottowattamies at Big Foot Lake, the death of the boy, and the marriage of the girl to a trader at Koshkonong.

"The militia officer, being greatly interested, promptly undertook to find out the home of his Kentucky comrade and to furnish him with this clue to one who might prove to be his missing sister.

"Our rejoicing over this prospect was without bounds. 'Oh, I shall see my mother again!' Such was the burden of my Madie's song. 'But they cannot take me away from *you*, Angus? They have no power to do that?' was ever the question that followed; and constantly was I obliged to reassure her, as well as to moderate her transports by setting before her the possibility of a disappointment.

"Late in the following spring, a traveller, guided from Chicago by the Sau-ga-nash, a half-breed chief, who had, at the instance of the commandant at Chicago, consented to accompany him, arrived at our dwelling. It was Captain Hartstone, in search of his missing sister.

"There were too many particulars by which the lost one could be identified, to leave any room for doubt. The names of Madie and Willie were of themselves sufficient; the burn upon the shoulder was remembered perfectly by Captain Hartstone as having been the work of a careless little colored boy who was playing with the children. The captain was some five years older than his sister, Willie having been intermediate between them. There were various little incidents which the brother recalled, and which seemed to draw with magnetic power from

Madie's slumbering memory other links of a chain which furnished corroboration beyond dispute, even had not the strong personal likeness been all-sufficient.

"We received the gallant captain as a brother, and Madie took him to her heart, almost as if they had never been separated. It was so delightful to the young man to find in his sister, not the tanned, untutored, half-savage being he had expected to see, but a graceful, refined, well-informed, almost an accomplished young woman, that he hardly could cease from commenting upon the subject. Of course, it soon became a question of restoring her for a time to her mother. The journey of the brother had been made by the Ohio River to St. Louis, thence, with an escort furnished by the Indian Superintendent at that place, in a large bark canoe up the Illinois and Des Plaines Rivers to Chicago.

"There was no obstacle to their returning by the same route. Madie would not listen to any plan of leaving her little one behind, particularly as there was every appliance for making the journey in perfect comfort. The only drawback was, that I should not be able to accompany them farther than to Chicago. The interests confided to my keeping required my watchful supervision in these disturbed times; but I promised to use all diligence in carrying out an arrangement I had for some time contemplated, —the transferring my whole establishment to Prairie du Chien, with the exception of a moderate stock, to be frequently renewed, under McCann and Robineau. That the Indians were beginning, as the phrase is, 'to show their teeth,' there was no manner of doubt; and it behooved us to be prepared for it. I was glad, upon the whole, that my darlings were to be out of the country for the present, knowing it would be no difficult matter for me, after a few weeks, to slip down the Mississippi

from the Prairie to rejoin them in Kentucky, and that we could then decide what our future course of life should be.

"It was arranged that I should escort the party as far as Chicago, carrying my little Mallie before me upon the saddle, and that the young sister of my blacksmith should accompany them in the capacity of child's nurse. As the water was in a good stage at this season, the travellers could easily pass in their canoe from the South Branch through the Rigolet to the Des Plaines, and thus all their journey from the time of their leaving Fort Dearborn would be made in comparative comfort.

"We were within a day of the time appointed for our departure, when, in the afternoon, as I was passing through my stable-yard, I saw a person whom I at once recognized slink suddenly behind one of the log buildings which formed the inclosure of that part of the establishment. Amable Laupien!—the friend and counsellor of Española and her family! What was he doing on my premises? Had he not worked me mischief enough already?

"I stepped forward as quickly as possible; but he had disappeared. I looked into the different buildings, then made an errand into Robineau's cabin, but without finding the one I sought. Madame Robineau was alone, engaged in the manufacture of a small mat for her floor.

"'Where is Laupien, and what does he want here?' I asked.

"'Choween ke-ken-don,'* was the curt answer.

"'I do not wish to come across him. You may tell him so for me,' I said, in Chippewa. The woman made no reply.

"Young Hartstone had gone up the lake, fishing, with

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* I don't know.

Robineau and a Winnebago, most characteristically named Wau-kaun-kah, or the Snake, the greater part of whose time had been of late spent in lounging around the magasin, or gliding away and returning, none knew why or wherefore. It was not the first excursion that the three had made together, from which I drew the conclusion that my young relative must be fond of the sport, since for the sake of enjoying it he could tolerate the society of one of the hated race.

"This day they returned later than usual, and I thought Hartstone's brow looked somewhat clouded. It was a circumstance to be remarked, he being usually so gay and light-hearted. When he came into the house he walked quietly to his sister's apartment, very soon after which I saw them, her arm linked in his, strolling along the banks of the lake, and finally losing themselves from view behind a thicket at no great distance. It was quite dark when the two returned from their walk, and our evening meal was at once placed upon the table. Both Hartstone and his sister were taciturn, and I thought Madie had been crying; but that had been no unusual thing with her during the last two or three days; tears had sprung to her eyes every time our parting had been alluded to.

"The expression on the brow of Tom, as we were now accustomed to call my brother-in-law, was, however, so thoughtful, and at times so stern, as quite to startle me. At a sign from him, Madie left the room as soon as the meal was finished, and he then abruptly plunged into his subject.

"'I have been telling my sister,' he said, 'that I do not think it by any means a good plan to undertake to carry the little girl with us to Kentucky.'

"'I have been afraid from the first,' I replied, 'that the journey would be too much for a child of that age; but

Madeleine's heart seems so set on showing the baby to her mother.'

"'It must be *unset*, then,' he said, harshly, 'that is'—correcting himself, and smoothing his speech, 'we must try to persuade her to leave the child behind.'

"I was amazed at the manner, still more than at the matter of his remark.

"'Has anything occurred to give this idea particular force?' I asked. 'As we had settled it, it seemed that the journey, upon the whole, would be made without undue fatigue. You have appeared to concur in our plans, and, although it would be my preference to have my little one remain with me while her mother is absent, I confess I do not like to disappoint your sister.'

"'The question is not what we *like*, but what has *got* to be done,' he said, in his former abrupt tone.

"'Does Madie agree to it?'

"'Of course not; but she will if you insist on keeping the child.'

"'I cannot do that; but, if you are apprehensive of being annoyed, I can persuade my wife to give up her visit to her mother for two or three months, until I have carefully turned over all the property in my hands belonging to the Company, and am a free man. After that I can take her myself to Kentucky.'

"He sprang up, then, as if by a sudden effort, sat down again, and composed his features, though he could not quite subdue the flush that had spread over them.

"'My reasons are quite sufficient,' he said, becoming, as it seemed to me, a little plausible in his manner. 'We all know that the Indians are thoroughly unsettled all through the country.'

"'I had hoped that the lesson you gave them last November had had the effect of settling them,' was my reply.

"'Yes,' he went on, 'but we never know where to find them,—what circumstances may embolden them to another attempt. If I have my sister alone, I can carry her through the country like a streak of lightning. I have engaged those who will act as both guides and scouts. I think you must see how important it is, just at this juncture, that we should be as free and unincumbered as possible,—that we should have nothing to embarrass us, under whatever circumstances may arise.'

"'It is as you say. It would be my own proposition, but for Madie's sake. However, I shall feel emboldened to go for her all the sooner, if her visit has been a separation from her child as well as from me.'

"There was no occasion for Hartstone's setting his teeth together, as he certainly did at this remark of mine. I could not pretend to comprehend him; but, having once heard a Kentuckian, whom I came across, describe his race as 'half horse, half alligator, with a touch of the snapping-turtle,' I took it for granted that these demonstrations were in accordance with the young man's idiosyncrasy.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

"I WOULD not have had Madie suspect that her brother was seeking to rid himself of the trouble of our little darling; though that was the only interpretation I could give his strange conduct.

"I contented myself with setting before her the hazards and exposure of the journey for one so young; and, as

her brother did not hesitate to do the same in still stronger terms, she yielded, with the same remark that I had used,—'You will come for me, then, all the sooner, seeing that I am parted from both my darlings. Do not let it be more than two months, remember; and perhaps we can persuade mamma to return with us for a visit.'

"Though Nannie McKee would not now be needed in the capacity of a nurse, I proposed that she should accompany my wife, to wait upon her and care for her. There was again the frown from Hartstone, and a hasty—

"'By no means,—we have servants for my sister in her own home.'

"'Her own former home,' I quietly corrected, with a smile at Madie, who glanced at her brother as if hesitating to return it.

"I accompanied them to Chicago, and took leave of my wife, with oft-repeated promises on her part of writing me immediately on her arrival in St. Louis, giving her letters in charge to a friend whose address I furnished her, and who would be sure to forward them to me by the first opportunity; for, you will remember, there were no regular mails or postal arrangements in those days.

"It would take but six days, I knew, for their canoe to reach St. Louis; then, allowing the time necessary for a flat- or keel-boat to ascend the Mississippi in the present stage of water, I ought to receive tidings of the travellers in less than a month. I had calculated the time carefully; and at the expiration of a sufficient period I sent an express to the Prairie. He returned with none but business letters, several of which were of a date later than that at which Hartstone and his sister should have been in St. Louis. Boats had been up in greater numbers than usual, both for the Prairie and for trading-posts above; therefore there had been no lack of opportunities for sending letters,

had such been left or forwarded according to the directions I had furnished.

"Too impatient to remain quietly waiting, I next came myself to this place. Still the same disappointment. There were letters from various friends and correspondents, but not a line from Madie or from Hartstone. Though greatly alarmed and distressed, I yet for a while strove to comfort myself with the belief that Madie, in her impatience to reach her mother, had persuaded her brother not to stop at St. Louis, but to seize the first chance of transferring themselves from the canoe to some boat ascending the Ohio. In that way her letters, being confided to an unfaithful messenger, might have been lost. I proceeded with all possible expedition in my task of getting the property under my charge in such a position that I could safely leave my station, resolving to set out, at an earlier period than I had proposed, for Kentucky, to bring my darling back to her home. With the best exertions I could use, several weeks were consumed before this was quite accomplished. I had just returned to Koshkonong, after having installed Mr. and Mrs. McCann in a comfortable home at this place, where alone I should have felt safe to leave my little girl, when the most overwhelming tidings burst upon me.

"A messenger arrived from Big Foot Lake, from the family of Madame Robineau, to notify her that the principal men of their band had been summoned to Chicago; that war had been declared between the United States and Great Britain; that the commanding officer at Fort Dearborn had received orders to march away somewhere East, but that before he went he was to talk with the Indians and make them valuable presents. How I thanked God that I had got my child safely away from a region of such danger!

"To pack up the rest of our belongings, and transport as many of them to the boats waiting for them in the Wisconsin as our pack-horses could carry, was the work of a very short time.

"The chiefs of the villages near saw nothing to object to in this. We were supposed to belong to their Great Father and ally the King of Great Britain, whose sway was considered to extend over the whole Northwest. It was, in their eyes, but the part of wisdom to keep our goods and chattels out of the way of marauders, whether Neechees* or Chee-mo-ko-mon.†

"My engagés, as you may believe, worked in double-quick time when the news of the massacre of the whites at Chicago by the Pottowattamies, who had engaged to protect them in their march to Fort Wayne, was added to the first distressing tidings. However closely allied to the surrounding tribes by the ties of blood or friendship, there were few who did not prefer the security of the settlement, where they could be 'forted' — as the frontiersmen express it—in case of danger; and all were anxious to be off.

"The village of La Prairie at that time consisted of not more than forty or fifty families. Kindly, warm-hearted people they were, who gave me a cordial welcome; but a new obstacle to the carrying out of my plans at once presented itself.

"The news of the declaration of hostilities had already reached the *habitans*, by boats from St. Louis; by the way of the Wisconsin they had also learned that the island of Mackinac had fallen into the hands of the British.

"Every citizen of the place belonged, in feeling and by tradition, to Canada; that is, to the British Government.

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* Indians. † Americans.

There was hardly an American among them. No language was spoken save French and Indian; no customs were observed but those of *La Marriale*, as handed down through successive generations. I found the leading men already talking of organizing and marching to offer their services to the British commander at Mackinac,—an indication of energy and patriotism quite amazing in a people ordinarily so quiet and unenterprising. Had they *acted* as well as talked, it would have been more amazing still.

"I soon found my movements scrutinized. I had made no secret of my intention to proceed to St. Louis; but I was met with the question,—

"'How can you, a British subject, venture among the enemy? If you are a Yankee, oh, very well—only tell us so. Here we are all brothers—we know what we mean to do. At all events, we will take care not to be butchered, like those poor people at Chicago.'

"These things would be said pleasantly, yet in full earnest. I was under *surveillance*, as I soon found; I was not to be permitted to leave.

"'No, no,' one would say, laughing; 'no spies to carry reports——'

"'But, my friend,' I would say, 'consider my position. My business is of the most pressing character. I propose to go and return immediately, without a week's unnecessary delay.'

"'Eh bien! and what the better would you be for your journey? You arrive at Saint Louizon—the authorities ask you, "Are you an American citizen?" If you say yes, it will be, "Go report yourself, then, at headquarters, and you will be furnished with arms and men to go back and take care of those gentlemen who did not advise themselves to come with you and offer their services." If, on the contrary, you say, "I am no citizen—I am come

attending a little to my own business," what will the answer be? "Halloo! send me a file of men to take charge of this traveller! Clap him in jail or in the guard-house! Travelling John Bulls are not very safe cattle in these times."'

"I could not be blind to the force of these arguments. I was hemmed in between two fires. A thousand deaths were contained in what I suffered as the long months went on, and I thought of my beloved wife, whom I could neither see nor hear from—of whose very existence, in fact, I could not feel assured."

"You seem not to have pleaded your wish to rejoin your wife as an excuse for your journey down the Mississippi," said Mr. Lindsay.

"No; there were none with whom I was on sufficiently intimate terms to be giving them my family history. I took it for granted that the traders generally knew of my marriage with Española; whether they knew of its dissolution was a question. It was not an agreeable subject in my thoughts; still less would it have been in discussion with comparative strangers. I am naturally a little reticent, except with dear friends; and I had said to myself, 'When I get my Madie back again, I can present her to my circle of acquaintance here, and then will be the time to explain all the circumstances of the past.' I do not remember to have heard any speculations hazarded as to the little girl who called Mrs. McCann 'Mamma Bessy.' I fancy the simple people cared very little whom she actually belonged to.

"It was a full year before I succeeded, by means of heavy bribes, in inducing a half-breed, to whom I had done an important service, to obtain for me by stealth a canoe and a couple of Saukie guides to take me down the long, desolate course of the Mississippi to St. Louis. It was a

perilous undertaking; but Letellier, my confederate, answered for the fidelity of his cousins whom he had pressed into my service, and they fulfilled scrupulously their part of the compact. All my affairs, and, chief of all, the welfare of my little Mallie, I left in the hands of the excellent McCann and his wife.

"On my arrival at St. Louis I went straight to the house of my friend Crawford, to ask for news. Before replying to one of his questions, I tore open a letter which he handed me, saying that it had reached him a few weeks previous, but that the cessation of intercourse with the settlements above had prevented him from forwarding it."

Mr. McGregor paused a moment, then rose and unlocked a cabinet, from a drawer of which he drew forth a packet tied with a black ribbon. He selected a folded paper, somewhat discolored by time, though carefully preserved in a soft and thin covering which enfolded it.

"No eyes but mine have ever perused these lines since they reached me," he said; "but I cannot trust myself to repeat them to you."

Mr. Lindsay read, as follows:—

"My brother long ago gave me a letter from you, which my father was never willing I should answer till now. But, Angus, I would have done it before, only I knew that it could not be sent without their permission. Oh, Angus, you know—don't you?—that I would have gone every step of the way on foot to tell you I was living, even if I had had to turn right back again; but in these dreadful times what could I do? It has been worse to me to think of your sorrow than of my own. I have promised my father to remember what is my duty in writing to you, if I can,—oh, if I can! but it is so hard!

"They tell me that I do not belong to you,—that I never

was lawfully yours,—that our darling child is—how can I write it? Oh, I *know* you believed that you had a right to marry me; I know your noble and brave heart. You would never, never do wrong, wilfully, to any human being. I tell them so, and I am quite sure mamma believes me. I cannot understand it, but papa says we have broken God's law and lived in sin; and Tom—oh, I cannot tell you how hardly Tom expressed himself before he went away to the war. He almost broke my heart,—no, not broke it; you must not think that.

"I try to feel reconciled to God's decrees. He knows that we never meant wrong; but it would be sinful in us, papa says, to meet again. Oh, Angus, my best, best friend, we must strive not to be rebellious. It is so hard to give up my precious baby! It was Tom who insisted on that, and made papa promise that it should be so; but I can bear it for your sake, for I am leaving her to you. She will be a comfort to you, and *you* will not consider her a disgrace.

"They tell me it is a sin even to wish to see you again; but how can I help it? how *can* I help it? Angus, try to be comforted. You know, don't you, that I shall pray for you all the time, and for that dear, dear child? There will come a day when we shall be reunited in a better world, where we shall know what is right. Sometimes it seems to me that papa cannot be quite right; but then he reads to me from the Bible, to show me how wrong we have been, and my mind becomes clouded, so that I do not see clearly which is right and which is wrong. I have promised him not to write as if I belonged to you any more, but to say good-by; but not forever,—oh, Angus, not forever! Have my poor darling brought up religiously, if you can. May God spare her any such troubles as——

"Give my dear love to Mr. and Mrs. McCann. God bless you! God bless you! God bless you!

"MADIE.

"P.S.—If you should ever receive this and answer it, I do not suppose they will let me have your letter."

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

MR. LINDSAY, with deep emotion, perused this outpouring of a breaking heart. He wiped away the tears which had gathered in his eyes, and, folding the paper with reverential tenderness, exclaimed,—

"Poor lamb! poor lamb! What could you do, Angus? Were you able to hasten to her?"

"Yes, there was no obstacle in my way. My friend was an influential citizen, and through his interposition I succeeded in taking passage in the first boat ascending the Ohio. I had lost no time in establishing my citizenship, and, there being fortunately just then no call for more militia than were already in the field, I was able with scarcely any delay to set off for the little river town near which my father-in-law resided.

"Distracted with fear and uncertainty, I passed the time of my weary voyage in poring over Madie's letter, questioning with myself what it could all mean, what falsehoods my darling had been told, what object her family could have had in thus torturing and endeavoring to disgrace her.

"I had not withheld from Tom the slightest particular of my history, and he had not offered a suggestion impugning the validity of my marriage with his sister.

"Had he been playing the hypocrite all the time? And

had it been a settled plan with him from the first to disembarrass her of her child and then separate her from me altogether? Some dreadful influence had been brought to bear upon my poor girl. Doubts and suspicions had been instilled; but they had not been able to shake her faith in me; there was comfort in that!

"At length I reached her father's house. It was a spacious mansion, evidently the abode of wealth and comfort. A colored servant opened the door to me, and my almost breathless inquiry for Mrs. McGregor was met by a look of wonder, and the answer, 'No such lady here, sir,—nobody but Missis and Miss Madie.'

"'Yes, Miss Madie. Tell her Mr. McGregor—no, stay; take her this card; she will come——'

"'Reckon not, sir. Miss Madie's too sick, I reckon——'

"I did not wait to hear any more. I flew past him and bounded up the stairs towards which he was looking. I cared little whose privacy I intruded on, so I could but get sight and speech of my darling. A murmur of voices guided me to a half-open door. I strove to compose myself, that I might not, by entering too abruptly, startle her; and, as quietly as I could, I, after a gentle knock, presented myself. Her cry of joy was all that I heard,—her outstretched arms, as she lay on her couch, all that I saw. I held her again, her sweet head nestled in its own place against my heart, and for a moment I did not observe the havoc that sorrow and suffering had made.

"There were people present, and voices sounded; but I neither heard nor heeded, till her hysteric sobs were broken by a grave, stern voice of reproof:—

"'Madeleine, my daughter, this is all very wrong. Do you set your God at defiance?'

"She started up, affrighted; but I drew her close to me again.

"'Am I addressing Mr. Hartstone?' I asked, in as respectful a tone as I could command. 'If so, he will, of course, excuse this want of ceremony on the part of a husband who has been so long separated from his wife, doubtful even, until within the last fortnight, whether she were living or dead.'

"'I am Mr. Hartstone,' was the reply. 'I am the father of that young lady; and, as you appear not to be apprised of the fact, I must tell you that we do not recognize any claim on your part to use the language and adopt the manner you do towards our daughter. I must insist on your quitting the apartment, sir. We consider your whole course of conduct so unworthy——' He hesitated as he looked at me, doubting, perhaps, whether it would be wise to take a high tone. I replied, as calmly as I could,—

"'I perceive, sir, that you are laboring under some misapprehensions, which I cannot doubt a few words of explanation will remove. But we must have no discussion here. As for the authority for my words and actions, they are contained in my marriage certificate, and another document, lawful in our remote Territory,—the attestation, namely, of the commandant and other officers at the military post where your daughter and I were united. Your daughter has doubtless certified you that she gave herself to me willingly. Is it not so, my Madie?'

"'Oh, yes, yes! I told papa all that,' she said, without looking up. Each minute, as I held her, the great, the terrible change that had come over my precious one was forcing itself more and more palpably upon me. She had become comparatively tranquil as I soothed her; but her heart, as I could feel, was beating as if it would leap out of its prison.

"A pale, gentle-looking lady, whom it was easy to recognize as her mother, busied herself with offers of restora-

tives, and other ministrations to her daughter's comfort. In spite of her husband's forbidding frown, she looked indulgently at me when she saw the perfect love and trust with which Madie at length raised her eyes to mine.

"The father still showed no symptoms of yielding.

"'In my own house, sir, do you brave me?' he said.

"'By no means,' I replied; 'on the contrary, I could wish that after a little you would allow me to meet whatever you may advance in condemnation of what has passed between your daughter and myself. If, however, you are in earnest in your request that I should at once leave your roof, I shall have to ask Mrs. Hartstone to kindly supply my wife with a bonnet and shawl, that I may take her to some other asylum. You are not afraid to trust yourself to my strong arms, my Madie?' I inquired. 'I have carried you when you were a far greater weight than now.' And I gathered her attenuated form still closer to me.

"Her mother broke down at these words. She looked at her husband, and he again at me. Perhaps the way in which my darling clung to me softened him: after a moment's deliberation, he said,—

"'I have, of course, no wish to drive my daughter from my house, nor have I suggested, sir, that you should leave it. That is not Kentucky fashion. If you are, as you affirm, armed with the authority of the law, it is in vain for me to interpose my protest. My only son is away with Harrison's army. His mode of dealing with the question might be different; at my age, however, and in view of my position as a professor, I have no alternative but to allow my daughter to decide between us. I have set before her her duty—I can do no more. Madeleine, my daughter, whom do you prefer to have remain with you,—your parents or this gentleman?'

"She raised herself and clasped me around the neck

with her poor, thin arms. 'He is my husband, my own!' was all she said. Her mother, all in tears, pointed to the bell-handle.

"'If you need anything,' she said, 'a servant will be at hand to attend to you.' Then, drawing near as her husband quitted the apartment, 'If you can soothe her to sleep,' she whispered, 'I will then take your place, and the sooner this matter is settled with her father the better.'

"I did not disturb my darling by a single question. It was enough for me to witness, with heart-breaking anguish, the result of the efforts used to separate us. After a time, when I had brought her into a placid and even happy frame of mind, by talking to her of our little one and the good friends who had her in charge, or by narrating amusing little incidents that had transpired since we parted, she fell into a tranquil slumber, and I repaired to my interview with Mr. Hartstone.

"The story I learned was to this effect:—

"No doubt or thought of dissatisfaction had existed in the mind of my brother-in-law until the second day that he went fishing with Robineau and Wau-kaun-kah. Then it was that the former enlarged upon the subject of my marriage with Española and the manner in which it had been dissolved. Tom had been from the first a little annoyed at the idea of the connection,—from hatred of the race, merely: the question of color, so long as the union was sanctioned by neither law nor gospel, would have had nothing particularly repulsive to him. When I had told him about my former marriage, and explained to him that it had proved to be, in effect, no marriage, it was all very well. He rather laughed at my effort 'to whitewash myself,' as he called it, 'when there was not the slightest occasion.' That I had regarded the tie as temporary—one to be broken according to the whim or convenience of the

moment—would, to his mind, have been extenuation sufficient. That Española had taken the initiative and run away, was, according to his ideas, in the nature of things. 'She had seen somebody she liked better, either white or red; that was the way with these colored women: they were always fond of change.'

"Certain hints from Robineau, however, set him thinking, and he regarded it as a fortunate circumstance that Amable Laupien should be of the fishing-party on the following day, ready and willing to afford still further information in answer to his questions. That wretch had no scruple in assuring him that the tie between Española and myself was regarded by her and her family as a valid marriage, and that it was not until my proposal to bring home the young white girl as a second wife, that her eyes were opened. That Española had entreated and pleaded with me not to give her place to another, but, finding me so resolute as even to go to Big Foot's village myself and purchase the young girl, with a sum so large that I had to assign poverty as an excuse for not taking my wife and child with me on a visit that I made to Montreal about that time,—then she saw she was to be thrust out. Everybody could understand that a white wife would not tolerate a red woman in the same lodge. That after the white wife was bought and brought, Española went to her father's to visit for a time, hoping I would reconsider my determination and remember what a good and loving wife she had ever been to me, and trusting, also, that I would reflect that a marriage such as ours was, by the customs of the country, as strong as the tie could possibly be made; but, my heart being set on this young girl, I would not and could not live away from her, so all hope for poor Española had to be given up, and she was now, after two years, still unhappy and disgraced in her father's lodge. And, to add

to her grief, her little girl, that she had been so ambitious for, was growing up wild like any other pappoose,—'very unlike,' Amable took care to add, 'her more fortunate little sister.'

"That word added fuel to flame with young Hartstone. That this little wild Indian should be indeed the sister of his niece—that he should be connected by ties of blood with the race he abhorred! It was almost worse than if Monica had been declared a mulatto! The hatred of Kentuckians for the Indians, at this day, amounted almost to insanity; and Hartstone was one of the most extreme in his feelings. He swore an oath to himself at the moment that the innocent little Madeleine should be no niece of his, and also that his sister, from the instant he took her under his charge for her journey to her father's house, should never more be my wife.

"He held himself, as I could recall, under tolerable restraint until we parted at the Aux Plaines; but from that time forward he horrified his sister, as she afterwards told me, by expressing doubts whether the tie that bound us would stand good in law. This was but a preparation for what followed.

"Mr. Hartstone, the father, was a stern, narrow-minded religionist. He was easily won to adopt his son's views, and to regard me as having taken advantage of the service I had rendered his daughter to entice her to what could not be looked upon otherwise than as a life of shame—a breach of the seventh commandment.

"My poor Madie pleaded in vain that all legal forms had been complied with—that we had been married out of the Prayer-Book, and in the presence of the commanding officer of the post. She only added to my condemnation. A man who could do as I was admitted to have done, would not scruple to fabricate documents. As for the Prayer-

Book—the *English* Prayer-Book—the book that our bloodthirsty enemies were at this very moment, probably, mumbling over at the head of their regiments,—what was it but a mass of flummery, only too often pressed into the service of Satan? Had not the excellent Elder K. lately remarked, in one of his searching discourses, that 'it was just fit to freeze hell over'? And as for officers, everybody knew what they became after a seasoning out on the frontier!

"Tom was the more violent, his father the more implacable and bitter. The satisfaction of finding his long-lost daughter was more than counterbalanced by the dishonor that had been put upon her, and there could be no reviving sentiment of tenderness so long as she maintained so unwaveringly her trust in me.

"The mother, as mothers will ever do, took her daughter to her heart, and tried to comfort her in her bitter trial; but the persistent harping of her father upon a theme so grievous and humiliating, the separation from me and her child brought about by the war, and the fact of her never receiving any tidings from me, all wore upon her gentle nature, until at length her health gave way. Her father succeeded in persuading her that her marriage with me was a mere nullity—that I was the husband of Española and of no one else—that she had no right to bring an illegitimate child into an honored and honorable home—and that her duty was to take the earliest opportunity of apprising me of her views and her determination to live no longer the life she had lived.

"She had, in all this time, received but one letter from me; whether the others had been intercepted or lost on the way, I never knew.

"Tom had gone off to the war at the first blast of the bugle. He was with General Harrison, and formed one of Johnson's cavalry, a position most congenial to so fervent an Indian-

hater as he proclaimed himself. Whether his absence made his sister's position less intolerable, I cannot say. They had accomplished their work. The moment I gazed fully upon my precious one, I saw that she would never embrace her child again."

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

It was several minutes before Mr. McGregor could continue his narrative. At length he proceeded:—

"I met all that Mr. Hartstone had to advance, with a patient statement of the facts as they actually existed.

"It was, of course, a tremendous evil in his eyes that I had, in the first place, married a native; that I had not, when she left me, called in the military force to compel her to return to me; that, failing in that, I had not contented myself under my enforced widowhood, instead of attempting to yoke myself again; and so on, through innumerable counts.

"'And how about your daughter?' I could not forbear asking. 'Should I have left her in Big Foot's lodge? or should I have brought her into my own home, to live under my protection, an object of suspicion, however pure and innocent she might be?'

"'Oh, as to that, when we look at all the features of the case, we are unquestionably your debtors; and I am afraid Tom did not sufficiently keep in mind the fate from which you saved his sister. He dwelt too much on the family honor. Poor Tom! He is too high-toned. He always thinks of the blood of the Hartstones, not remembering' (here he changed to a lower key) 'that which is written, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."'

"'Poor Tom!' might he well say. A few days only had elapsed, and they had established a perfectly good understanding between my father-in-law and myself, when, along with the news of the battle of the Thames, came tidings fraught with woe to the Hartstone mansion. Tom, the only son—the handsome and brave—the pride and glory of his parents—was laid low by a Shawnee bullet in the first flush of victory. The grief of her parents told disastrously on my poor Madie. She mourned, too, for Tom, and grieved that she had been the cause of trouble and mortification to him.

"'But I could not help it, dear, could I?' she would ask. 'Do you think mamma blames me for his going? Does she think he would have stayed at home if it had not been for me?'

"I would do all in my power to reassure her; but still, in her weak and nervous state, the idea of having been in some way accessory to her brother's death preyed upon her, and, added to what she had already undergone, proved too much for her to bear. Before two months more had passed, the unfortunate father and mother were 'written childless.'

"It was a comfort to me," said Mr. McGregor, after a short pause, "that I could minister to the parents of my darling during the many months that ensued in which there was no possibility of returning to my child, the object, now, of all my solicitude. A fatality seemed, however, to have settled upon the household. Mr. Hartstone, seeking to divert his mind by out-of-door occupation, exposed himself too carelessly about his plantation in some of the cold, sleety weather of the following winter. He was attacked with a pleurisy, which carried him off in a little more than a week. This put the finishing-stroke to my poor mother-in law, already an invalid. Before the birds

again sang among the branches, she too was laid in the family vault beside her husband and daughter.

"Mr. Hartstone, by will, left all his property, which was very considerable, to his little grand-daughter, after his wife. No stronger proof could have been given of his utter renunciation of former prejudices.

"I had no opportunity of returning to the Prairie for many months after these events; not even on the declaration of peace, as the knowledge of that happy event reached us in the winter, and the ice was an effectual barrier to the ascent of the Mississippi until spring should unlock the chain.

"But I could not remain quiet in that desolate mansion, where I had found the knell of all my hopes. I must be away and busy. I spent a little time in St. Louis, and then joined an expedition for trapping, hunting, and making acquaintance among the peaceful Otoes and Omahas.

"The executors of Mr. Hartstone, who were also my daughter's trustees, having taken due information from my business friends in St. Louis, felt justified in allowing her ready money to be invested in the American Fur Company, of which I was now a member. For this reason it was more than ever my interest to extend its relations and labor for its success.

"While I was in St. Louis, a singular incident occurred. I was walking along the street one day, when, at a short distance before me, I saw a woman in native costume leading by the hand a little girl about nine or ten years of age. The thought flashed through my mind, 'My little Monica must be now about that age and size. Poor child! Instead of the garb of civilization, she is perhaps arrayed in match-ee-ko-tah* and mitasses,† ranging wild, a

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* Cloth petticoat. † Leggings.

veritable little *sauvagesse*. It must not, shall not be. As soon as I return home, I will set measures on foot to obtain leave of her Indian protectors to educate and provide for her. Money will perhaps accomplish what prayers and arguments have failed to do.' As we walked on, the little girl suddenly looked back, and her bright, pretty face brought my poor Monica still more strongly to my mind.

"She said something to the Indian woman who accompanied her. The latter did not turn, but drew her couverte* of blue cloth more closely over her face. Involuntarily I quickened my pace.

"They soon reached a large building, the lower shutters of which were closed, and entered an alley at the side of the house. As I came opposite the passage, they were just being let in at a low door, and for a moment the woman turned and glanced towards the street. There was a look and movement so like Española, that, without a moment's reflection, I darted forward; but the door closed suddenly after the two, and I saw them no more. I retraced my steps to the street, smiling at my folly in thus imagining a double resemblance in entire strangers.

"When I was at length able to return to this place, I found myself anxiously waited for. Neither McCann nor Bayne were willing to remain longer in this region. They were British subjects, and such they proposed to remain. With reluctance I was compelled to part with my faithful friends and see my dear little Mallie again left without a mother's care. I arranged my household as well as I could. McKee and his daughter Nannie were disposed to do their utmost in keeping matters orderly and comfort-

* Blanket.

able; but it was sad and lonely, and not too home-like at its very best.

"The one great want, that of a nurse in whom I could confide, was the trial which most disturbed my quiet. I might, it is true, have brought out two or three servants from the Kentucky household, among whom there were several of superior qualifications; but it had happened that an opportunity presented of leasing on favorable terms the whole establishment, servants included, and it had seemed best not to disarrange anything belonging to it. Thus was I situated, when my little Mallie fell ill of scarlet fever, and I was reduced almost to the verge of despair.

"Our neighbors were kind in calling and offering their temporary services, but there was no one who could take the charge and fill the office of head-nurse. I was totally inexperienced, Nannie hardly less so. I trembled constantly lest we might, in our ignorance, commit some fatal blunder.

"The child continued to grow worse. The post surgeon and the old half-Indian doctress whom, to the great annoyance of the former, I begged to drop in three or four times a day, looked anything but hopeful. Oh, the agony of those long nights, when I sat with my poor little one in my arms, carefully striving to carry out all the physician's directions, but feeling how ineffectual were my efforts to supply the tender, instinctive motherly skill of which she had need!

"At last came a crisis when I felt that I must give her up. It was late in the evening, and the doctor had not yet left after his customary last visit. The child lay on a little couch, and, as I watched the physician observing, investigating, scrutinizing, I trembled lest the next words should be the exhortation to 'bear it like a man!' and I

answered aloud, in anticipation, 'I *cannot* bear it—I cannot see her die!' and I rose up in my agitation and left the room.

"I remained away but a short time, or what seemed such, absorbed as I was in the bitterness of my grief. Saying to myself, 'It is doubtless all over by this time,' I again entered the sick-room. The doctor had gone, but in the dim half-light I perceived two attendants,—the neighbor I had left, and another woman in the native costume, who sat with the child upon her lap, and who bent her head to conceal her face as I drew near. I saw at a glance that it was Española, but I did not address her by name.

"'Does the child live?' I asked, in Chippewa.

"'She lives; she will live,' was the low answer.

"All the night we tended her, and when the doctor came in the morning he too said she would live. It was only then that I could withdraw my mind to the contemplation of other subjects; only then that for the second time I addressed a question to Española:—

"'My other child,—Monica,—where is she?'

"'She is here. I received your message and brought her.'

"The neighbor bustled about a little in preparing some cups of coffee, having partaken of which herself, she departed.

"I summoned Nannie, and signed to Española to retire.

"'Go and take some rest,' I said: 'you are fatigued.'

"'No, I cannot leave the child,' she replied. 'She needs my care: the good God has given her into my charge.'

"I looked at her in amazement. 'Who has taught you this lesson?' I asked.

"'My cousin, the Reverend Mother at St. Louis.'

"'Then it was you whom I saw at St. Louis! How came you there?'

"'I went there to school. Father Leon had baptized me and made me a Christian. It was necessary that I should learn to live as a Christian.'

"Here was indeed a change. 'Was it Monica,' I asked, 'that I saw with you at the door of the convent?'

"'She was with me at the convent.'

"'And she is now here? We must not disturb the child: when she is quite out of danger, her sister must come and look upon her.'

"'She is to be her sister?'

"'She is to be her sister.'

"I dreaded her next question, lest it should be,—

"'And I?'

"But Española proffered not another word. She sat with her head bowed over little Madeleine, as she again lay upon her lap, and until the latter stirred with a faint moan she never changed her position by a hair's breadth.

"From that time forward until her complete recovery Española nursed the child with the most assiduous care; when all danger even of a relapse was past, she went away quietly one morning, in my absence, leaving Monica behind her.

"Whether the child was glad to be so left I could not determine. She had not seemed to manifest affection either for her little sister or for me. Her reply to my inquiries whether she would try to be happy in her new home was the simple, 'My mother says it is best for me to be here.' And if she were otherwise than contented, no one was ever the wiser.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

"If the charge of one child had been a care and a perplexity, that of two was, naturally, a double source of solicitude.

"Monica was of an age to require a teacher more advanced than any I found myself able to procure. She had already been many months in the convent at St. Louis, where, her abilities being of a rather superior order, she had made good progress in her studies; she could read and write, and speak both French and English tolerably well. Her mother, as I afterwards learned, had remained there with her, and had, from the time of her conversion, applied herself to the acquisition of so much of the ordinary branches of education as would enable her to appear respectably in the civilized position which was now with her a matter of preference.

"I was reluctant to separate my little girls, but wished rather to have them grow up in love and mutual dependence; and I rejoiced to see that Madeleine at once attached herself with her characteristic enthusiasm to her quiet and undemonstrative sister. How to secure for the two the proper supervision in their daily walk in life, to say nothing of their intellectual training, was now a matter of perplexity to me. While turning this question painfully in my mind, I received one day a call from a venerable-looking ecclesiastic, who meekly inquired if he could be permitted to see and converse with the little Catholic child—my daughter, as he understood—who had been baptized by him a few years previous.

"I should have made no objection under any circum-

stances: as it was, the almost saintly appearance of the old man made me hasten to gratify him. Monica was summoned, and after a few inquiries about her welfare, and a few questions and answers upon religious subjects, she was dismissed so promptly and decidedly that I saw that my visitor had another and more important errand in hand. He did not keep me long waiting.

"'The mother of that child is a monument of God's goodness to one who had long sat in darkness!' he said.

"I could not reply in corresponding phraseology, but I assented, with the remark, 'She seems indeed greatly changed.'

"'Truly, she is! From a heathen she has become a Christian—an humble, penitent Christian. All her faults, all her short-comings, have been expiated with tears and penances. And as she has sought forgiveness, so has she extended it to others. If she has had wrongs from any one, she is ready to cast the remembrance of them from her, and to be in a spirit of divine charity with all the world.' He looked at me.

"'She has had no wrongs at my hand,' I said.

"'She forgives all,' he repeated, 'and would herself be forgiven by all. God has forgiven her,—his representatives on earth have so declared it,—and shall man,' here he looked at me again pathetically, 'shall man be less merciful to his fellow-transgressor? Shall the poor unhappy one sue in vain for pardon?'

"I had foreseen the point to which he was tending—Española wished to return to me. That she should ever again take the place she had vacated, my Madeleine's place, was not for a moment to be thought of. Yet, obstinate though I may be by nature, I could not quite resist the pleading accents of the old man.

"'I have forgiven Española,' I said. 'Of that she is

well aware. Nay, more than that, I am deeply grateful to her. She has saved the life of my other child.'

"'Say rather that the good God has, for his own wise and merciful purposes, saved your child by her hand. It was He who gave her this claim to your tender consideration.'

"The brightening of his countenance was beautiful to look on, but it moved me only in part.

"'Española was my wife,' I said, 'and she threw from her the title and position: they were given to another, and cannot be a second time transferred. She who lies shrouded in the tomb will ever and alone be my wife, until we meet in a better world.'

"The good priest's countenance fell, for I spoke with solemn determination.

"'And her child,' he said, '*your* child, must then be branded with a stigma? You will tell the world that you have but one daughter, the one saved by this poor woman's watchful care; and that the other is——'

"'No,' I said, hastening to interrupt him; 'I have already shown to the world that Monica is my child equally with Madeleine. As for Española, she is welcome, if it so pleases her, to bear my name—to preside in my household—to occupy the place of a mother to both my daughters. She knows me well enough to feel assured of all the respect and consideration on my part that she can claim or desire. I will provide for her every comfort—my money and my time, to every reasonable extent, will be at her service. She shall have a portion of the mansion assigned to her, where she can live in absolute independence; and she shall have the undisputed control of our eldest child, who has been already, I observe, carefully trained in her own faith. She cannot, it is true, take again the place she has left—that is out of the question; but if this which I

offer will content her, you, sir, may tie the knot between us according to the forms of your Church, if that is allowed where one party is a heretic, at any moment you may choose.'

"'If she cannot recover the place she once occupied in your heart and in your home,' said the ecclesiastic, 'she must, of necessity, accept that which is offered her—a position of respectability. And she must accept it with thankfulness; for it was her own fault that she listened to a deceiver. Has it come to your knowledge, my good sir, that there was a most heinous motive prompting the action of the base Amable Laupein?'

"'Jealousy of my prosperity, and a determination to mar my happiness?' I asked.

"'No—a wish to detach your wife from you, that he might win her for himself. He gathered from your brother-in-law that the latter would use his influence with his parents to detain their child in Kentucky and not permit her to return to you. He made sure that in that case you would go to seek your wife, and probably be compelled to prolong your sojourn there for some time; for he knew, though you did not, that war with Great Britain was imminent. He counted on using your absence to prove to Española that she was hopelessly deserted, in which case he persuaded himself that she would turn to him for consolation. It was in the depths of her grief and despair at the discovery of this systematic treachery, and at the recollection of all that her own headstrong action had deprived her of, that I found her on my first missionary tour to the village of her father.

"'She did not listen to my consolations at first; but when I at length became acquainted with the history of her family and ascertained that she was related to the Superior of the Convent of Santa Anna, at St. Louis, I

imparted all the information I had gained to the Reverend Mother. She sent a pious sister with me on a second mission, and God blessed our efforts for the salvation of this poor soul, along with some few others of her race. In time she consented, her mother being no more, to go with me to her relative in St. Louis, there to begin a civilized and a Christian life.'

"I was much touched with the explanation of the good old priest, which was, of course, more detailed than I have given it to you. In a few days he waited on me again, to tell me that Española was at the house of the curé who had been established here to take charge of the few sheep in the wilderness. She was not yet sufficiently civilized to put on any airs of reluctance, but had come from her Indian home at the first summons. I asked her if she understood and accepted the terms on which alone I could invite her to return. She bowed her head without speaking; and so the Christian ceremony was pronounced between us, in the apartment which served as a vestry to the little church.

"How it comported with the conscientious scruples of Father Leon to receive our vows in an engagement which was to be in reality no marriage, I have never been able to understand. Perhaps he hoped that at no distant day our relations would be modified—that Española would, in time, win back for herself the place which she had forfeited; but it was not so. That which had been established and agreed upon between us, remained unchanged until the day of her death, which took place a little more than two years ago."

"My friend," said Mr. Lindsay, "to what a terrible punishment was this poor woman condemned! Would it not have been kinder to have left her in her native wigwam, with only the past grief to gnaw at her heart?"

civilized, for his personal endowments and heroic traits of

"No, I think not. You must remember that she had no educated sensibilities to be wounded by my indifference. Had her love for me been that which you imply, she would not have held out against all my efforts to win her back to my arms. No; in her visit to her relative at St. Louis she learned something of the shame and scandal of a divorce; she found how, under the most extenuating circumstances, such a severance of the marriage-bond is regarded by her Church; and she became aware, for the first time, of the position in which she had placed her child, on whom she doted. I am quite certain that the ostensible recovery of a position of respectability and dignity fully atoned to her for any distance and reserve in my deportment. She used conscientiously her best efforts to please me, and, except in one particular, she succeeded extremely well."

"Did she attempt to instil the tenets of her own faith into the mind of your youngest daughter?" asked Mr. Lindsay. "That is usually the apple of discord in households of a divided faith."

"No, it was not that. I had almost said it was something worse. It was a matter concerning her own child. Española ever kept up the custom of visiting her own relatives from time to time, and on these occasions, as I forbore to interfere, she would take Monica, who had a rather exaggerated admiration and fondness for her mother's people. As she would occasionally, after her return, make mention of the praiseworthy efforts of the child to win her relatives from paganism and to teach them Christian principles, I saw nothing to object to in these visits, till it came to my knowledge that the prominent object of these instructions and this solicitude was a young brave, her cousin, who has been remarked by all, both native and

character,—no less a personage than the famous Red Bird, who, as I informed you, put an end to his existence in prison the night on which my poor Monica disappeared. I should say, in excuse for my daughter, that she was extremely young—not more than fourteen—when the attachment first commenced——"

"Why, my friend," exclaimed Mr. Lindsay, "should you apologize for what appears to me the most natural thing in the world? The only wonder would have been if your daughter had remained indifferent to the extraordinary gifts, physical and moral, with which nature seems to have endowed this young man, when circumstances so strongly recommended him to her tender interest, and when too, in all probability, her mother sanctioned her preference."

"Whether she did so, or whether she only wilfully shut her eyes to what was going on, imagining that if the young savage became a Christian through our child's instrumentality I would be willing to accept him as a son-in-law, I could never learn. It always appeared to me that she was not dealing quite frankly with me when she declared it to be her earnest wish that Monica should dismiss him from her thoughts, and promised her efforts to separate them. She should not have suffered matters to grow to such a head as they had by the time Monica was sixteen. Through her mother's influence, as I suppose, and in obedience to my commands, she gave up the young brave, who had now become a chief, and who remained a heathen in spite of her labors; but she has never been happy since. Indeed, for several years I lived in constant dread that she would, for his sake, resolve to relinquish the comforts and the respectability of civilized life.

"We kept her at the convent in St. Louis for three years, as a matter of safety. It was only after the young

man married in his own tribe, and showed that he thought no more of her, that I ventured to bring her home; and they never, that I am aware of, saw each other from that time, until she happened in her journey home last summer to meet him, a prisoner under military guard for crimes which rendered him amenable to the laws."

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

We must now go back to the evening of Madame Jarrot's party Miss McGregor, as has been related, on quitting young Tremblay, descended the steps of the porch and glided towards the clump of cedar-trees. Though the sky was dark with the approaching storm, and the falling snow obscured the light from the windows to such a degree that it was not possible to distinguish objects clearly, she was aware, as she approached the place of rendezvous, of a dark mass partly enshrouded in the foliage.

Not doubting that it was Tshah-nee-kah, she ventured a low "P'haa-zheek?" (Who is it?) For answer, she found herself suddenly wrapped, almost to suffocation, in a heavy blanket which strong arms threw over her head and around her, while the deep guttural "Woank-hah nau-woo-nar!" (No noise!) told her that the clasp was not that of a friend.

Though thus admonished, she attempted a murmured explanation, when instantly the blade of a hunting- (or, as it was more customary to say, *scalping-*) knife drawn across the wrist, which was grasped tightly by one hand of the person whose other arm supported her and who seemed

to carry his weapon ready for action, warned her to silence.

She was dragged, rather than conducted, for a few rods, then lifted on a pony, upon which was already seated a third person, who, holding her fast in his arms, started off in the jerky but rapid gait natural to the animal he bestrode. The distance for which this pace continued, although but a few miles in fact, seemed to Miss McGregor interminable. The agitation and distress which filled her mind gave no room for speculation as to the causes of the mistake into which she imagined her captors to have fallen. It was evident that she was to be borne far away, for she after a time found her uneasy seat upon the animal exchanged for a still more uncomfortable position in a canoe of the narrowest dimensions.

At a command, in the unforgotten tones which she recognized as those of Tshah-nee-kah, to "lie flat and keep perfectly quiet," she became completely lost in conjecture and perplexity. What could it mean? Tshah-nee-kah, of all others, should not have been at a loss touching the identity of one who had spoken to him in his own language!

Was it possible that there had been really no mistake? —that it was by design that she had been seized instead of her sister?

The adroit and powerful arm of her first captor sufficiently revealed To-shun-neek, the brother of Way-noo-nah. It was with him that she had planned and plotted, —to him that she had shown how a scheme of this kind could be carried out. He was perfectly aware that her sister could not address him in Winnebago; her first word must have pointed her out as one of his own race.

Had there been, all along, a settled plan on their part to entrap her instead of her sister, to take her to their

village and perhaps make her over to the tender mercies of a jealous, vindictive woman? Had the very means she had taken to save poor Wau-nig-sootsh-kah been those most fitted to insure her own destruction?

Suddenly the idea flashed across her,—and it was more bitter than all other suggestions,—Was this a trick of Jerome's? Had he divined the treachery she was practising towards him, and provided her punishment by an act of treachery possibly the most direful in its consequences?

Yes, it must be so. A thousand recollections came rushing to confirm the suspicion. His apparent acquiescence in all that she proposed; his buoyancy of spirit in the dance, which, as she now recalled, savored of triumph; the large blue blanket, provided, perhaps, with a lingering feeling of anxiety for her comfort; all these, added to the certainty that there could have been, on the part of the savages, no want of recognition of her identity, left her little doubt that the cup she had prepared for another was, by deliberate scheming and with a terrible justice, commended to her own lips.

If this were indeed true, if Jerome and the family of Way-noo-nah had concerted together to pay off scores old and new, what was to be her fate? She knew her own people; she was aware that forgiveness of injuries formed no part of their code of morals; and although a captive woman was, as a general rule, treated by them with respect, yet there were enough of legends and traditions in the storehouse of her memory to give her a shuddering premonition of the manner in which Way-noo-nah might possibly be pleased to exercise the Indian woman's prerogative when her rival should be delivered a prisoner into her hands. Had she not once, with her own eyes, seen a tress of long fair hair streaming from a little scalp-

frame which a haggard squaw was brandishing as she rushed to mingle frantically in a dance of triumph?

For a time, burning indignation against Jerome, who had thus betrayed her, chased away all thought of fear, and caused the blood to course rapidly through her veins, making her insensible to the insufficiency of her clothing and the fatigues she had undergone; but soon came a reaction, and, chilled, exhausted, and wretched, she cowered in the narrow limits assigned her, to brood on the conviction that all her efforts, all her sacrifices of principle in behalf of the man she loved, would but tend to rivet his chains the tighter.

She gave no sign of consciousness until a whoop, which she recognized as the salutation of a white man, not the lusty, sonorous yelp of an Indian, caused her to spring up and throw back the covering in which she was enveloped. Her quick eye had time to take in, through the gray of the morning, a glimpse of a canoe paddled by a couple of voyageurs, when a strong arm drew her quickly to her former recumbent position, and a voice whose mandate—"Mee-quee-ray!" (Lie down!)—was accompanied by a significant gesture towards the knife-scabbard which an Indian ever wears depending from his neck, left her no choice but obedience.

"If they are any of my father's men," she said to herself, "they are sharp enough to have detected that I am no native; and, as I shall be missed immediately, their report will put those who are in search of me on the right track. If they are only in time! Oh, if they are only in time!"

The Puans paddled on with vigorous strokes for many succeeding hours. It was evident that they were afraid of being overtaken; also, that their own powers of enduring both hunger and fatigue were the gauge by which they measured those of their captive.

At length the canoe was run in to a bank, and the two Indians leaped on shore. The kneeling position which they had so long preserved seemed not in the slightest degree to have impaired their activity; but Monica found, to her dismay, that the long-continued constraint to which she had been subjected had so cramped her limbs as to render her unable to rise.

What if her captors should take the hint, and disembarrass themselves of her forever, by leaving her to perish with cold in this lonely spot? At the thought she raised herself with a desperate effort, and commenced chafing her feet and ankles. The younger savage looked somewhat compassionately at her as he quietly remarked,—

"See-nee hee-noo!" (It is cold.)

The elder, in reply, uttered a low observation, at which the other laughed. Monica hoped she did not rightly understand it: it sounded like—

"She will be warm enough by-and-by!"

"They will never dare to be guilty of such an atrocity!" she exclaimed, mentally, as she strove to crush down the recollection of the terrible fate of the unhappy Colonel Crawford. "There will be those of their tribe to whom I can appeal. I am a good walker. I can make my escape while they sleep, and travel to the Barribault villages and claim the protection of Day-kau-ray and The Little Elk. The principal chiefs will, from policy, if from no other consideration, never allow me to be sacrificed. Am I not the daughter of Haunk-shee-kah? They will not, they dare not leave me to the vengeance of that terrible woman!"

If the thought that the evils she was now suffering were precisely those which she had prepared for her loving and unoffending sister would now and then force itself upon her, she strove to stifle it with,—

"As long as it did not happen to her, and I am bearing

it all, what is the use of dwelling upon possibilities? It is *I* who am suffering, and Madeleine is at home, safe and comfortable, with doubtless her father and her lover both ministering all in their power to her happiness. That is ever the way! It is upon *me* that the burden of suffering and disappointment is ever laid! Well, I can bear, I suppose, all that may be in store! Still, I shall try, all the same, to release myself, and avoid the necessity of showing these Puans how thoroughly I am of their blood."

With this determination, she applied herself to the restoration of the suspended circulation, until, in time, she found herself able to quit the canoe and walk up and down in the light snow with which the bank was covered.

After a time To-shun-neek, with the utmost nonchalance, produced a small *porche* or bag of smoked deer-skin from the bottom of the canoe—it was anything but inviting in appearance. This he opened, and drew forth a handful of biscuits, dealing them out, without partiality, to the young lady and to his father. By further fumbling he next produced a boiled buffalo-tongue, which he proceeded to carve with his scalping-knife and divide equitably. She recognized the hand of Jerome in the viands thus laid in store. Bitter as was his resentment against her, he was yet, as it seemed, willing to spare her all minor aggravations of her punishment. The very sight of To-shun-neek's receptacle was sufficient to take away all appetite for its contents, yet Monica forced herself to munch a couple of the biscuits, for she knew that it would not do to impair her strength by absolute fasting, at a time when she would have need of all her physical powers.

For the same reason, she exercised herself in walking briskly up and down, striving to put herself in a glow during the short period of respite afforded her before her captors resumed their silent, monotonous voyage.

CHAPTER XC.

It was not until the forenoon of the second day that their voyage was brought to a close, and that, as was evident, quite unexpectedly to the Indians themselves.

A young Winnebago standing upon a little promontory, which they were approaching, shouted with the peculiar "news halloo," which warned them to stop and receive tidings.

"There are people up above," Miss McGregor heard him say, as Tshah-nee-kah and his son sprang ashore and walked quietly to join him. The rest of the communication was lost to her ear. It was evidently of serious import, for it was received with all the gesticulations which betoken astonishment and grief. The lifting of the hand, and the lugubrious change in the countenances of both, prepared her for some tale of horror; but neither of her companions approached to impart aught to her.

After a low, rapid conference with each other, the father and son stepped forward, gathered up their paddles and guns, drew the canoe into a little bayou between two hillocks, and made ready for their departure. It seemed an after-thought of old Tshah-nee-kah to disembarrass himself of his tattered, filthy green blanket and substitute it for the new blue one in which Miss McGregor sat wrapped. The derisive laugh with which he answered her exclamation of astonishment and disgust, put the climax to her humiliation. Cold and hunger and exhaustion,—the treachery of the friend she had believed devoted to her,—the cruelty of her mother's people, whom she had loved so well,—even the upbraidings of her own conscience,

she had borne with silent heroism; but this last petty indignity overwhelmed her. She bent her head into her hands, and wept in bitter earnest.

When she raised her eyes she was alone, for the young Puan who had brought tidings was just disappearing by a path into the woods, somewhat diverging from the one which "The Autumn" and "The Otter" had taken.

What was she now to do? Verily a retribution had overtaken her,—retribution doubly terrible, inasmuch as her fate involved, perhaps, that of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah.

She could not comfort herself with the certainty that the freedom of the Red Bird would be offered as the price of her restoration to her friends. Nobody would believe that she could have been kidnapped by her own people; they would rather feel convinced that she had gone *to* them, or *with* them of her own accord; and if that was her father's view of the matter, would he not say, in his anger, "Let her have her own way! If she prefers her mother's people, let her make the trial of a life among them"? Convictions like these did not help her to bear the terrible present,—the thoughts of the still more terrible future. But which way could she look for escape?

She shouted aloud, hoping to call back the messenger and inquire of him who were the people of whom he had spoken; for his words had implied that they were strangers, and the looks and actions of her captors showed that they were unwelcome ones.

She made the woods ring with her shrill, clear voice, but there were none that answered, save the echoes that seemed to mock at her distress. Now and then a crow would wing his flight and perch upon a branch near her, while, with discordant, melancholy note, he expressed his disapprobation of things in general. No other sight or sound broke the stillness of the solitude.

"They actually mean to leave me here to perish!" said the unhappy girl. "They fear that if I were carried to their home there would be some one to speak for my life; and they have taken this way to secure Way-noo-nah against any such interposition. Oh, Jerome, wicked and cruel! was this, too, a feature of your planning? If so, are you now rejoicing in the conviction of its success?"

Suddenly it flashed through her mind that this was God's holy day. She had not, since her capture, kept track of the flight of time. She had numbered only the anguish of the present hours, the possible horrors of the future.

Monica had, from a child, been scrupulously exact in her religious observances; but in this the hour of her calamity "to which of the saints should she turn?" She might call, but would there be any to answer her? Dared she invoke their holy aid, even against outward perils? Could she hope that good angels would show her a way out of the pit which she had digged for herself? She might vow a costly offering in payment of their interposition for her relief; the time had been when she would have ventured thus to bargain, but now she dared not,—it was forcing itself too palpably upon her conscience that she was but receiving the due reward of her own deeds. The blessed saints, if they were indeed permitted to look down upon her career, would, she felt, turn from her with horror.

She was not yet prepared, however, to supplicate forgiveness for her transgressions, and grace for the time to come. She could only bow her head in utter despondency, and, as she chafed her benumbed hands and wiped away the tears that would flow in spite of her efforts to suppress them, cry out,—

"Oh, I have sinned! I have sinned! What is to become of me? My father! My poor Madeleine! Is there no

one to help me? Am I to die and lie unburied, a prey to the wild beasts of the land?—I, that have loved myself so well!"

Worn with her travels up and down the margin of the river, for she was afraid to venture within the precincts of the wood, lest she should cut herself off from all chance of rescue, she at length seated herself on the frozen bank in utter hopelessness. She felt no strength to resist longer—a torpor was beginning to creep over her, which bade fair to put a speedy end to her sorrows.

The beat of hoofs upon the hard ground had hardly power to rouse her; yet, as the sounds drew nearer, she felt a sudden revulsion which enabled her to spring to her feet and send forth a cry in answer to the shouts that were ringing in the air.

She saw horsemen approaching; she thought she recognized the leader of the party; her heart gave one great bound as she knew that she was saved; then she lost all consciousness.

A little brandy from the flask which Logan carried, and the efficient ministrations in which he was assisted by the anxious old Michaud, ere long restored her to animation. In an incredibly short time their attendant, a practised woodman, had made a brisk fire in a spot from which the snow had blown, and was able to supply her with a cup of hot tea and a repast far more in accordance with her taste and habitudes than the larder of To-shun-neek had afforded.

The young bourgeois had enjoined his engagés to give no hint in Miss McGregor's presence of the fate of L'Oiseau Rouge. He was the friend of her childhood, he had told them in explanation, "and the poor young lady, if she had not already heard the sad news, had better learn it from her father or sister after her return."

Monica's cheerfulness was in a measure restored by the time the halt was over. She stoutly resisted Logan's proposition to have the tent pitched, that she might enjoy some hours of rest before setting her face homeward.

"No, she was not fatigued; she had been cramped in the little canoe, and somewhat discouraged and disheartened; that was all. She had felt sure, all along, that some kind friend would undertake to pursue and rescue her, though, to tell the truth, she had not expected aid so soon."

And, in the unwonted fulness of her heart, she narrated the circumstances of her abduction—of the warning her captors had received from the young Puan, not omitting the parting insult she had received at the hands of the old chief.

"Ah, that is what became of the blue *four-point!*" said Logan to himself. "I have been a little puzzled at not finding the young lady wrapped in it." But he gave no utterance to his thoughts in the matter; he only explained, with an air of contrition, that he had enlisted the services of a young Winnebago, whom he had found at an encampment of his people some distance below, by the promise of a bottle of phaa-zhee-nee-nah,* to hurry forward by a short cut to this bend of the river, which he had calculated the canoe would probably reach this forenoon.

"We must stop as we pass their lodges," Logan said, "that I may pay the young fellow his wages. It goes a little against my conscience; but your life and safety were the first consideration."

"And there is always this comforting certainty, that some decrepit old grandmother or chief, who is already intemperate, will cry and beg away the greater part of his treasure, so that your present will not be likely to do him

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* Whiskey—literally, Fire-water.

much harm," said Miss McGregor, who had become more affable and gracious than the bourgeois had seen her since, in the days of their journey up the Fox River, she had made it her policy to propitiate him. In detailing the particulars of her capture, she, however, made no mention of young Tremblay; and Logan was equally reticent.

They did not reach the Indian encampment, whence the messenger had been dispatched, until the following morning. The bourgeois recommended to Miss McGregor to keep on the trail with their two attendants, while he should ride aside and fulfil his contract with the young Puan; but to this suggestion she would not listen. She had a little errand there herself, she said, though without explaining that it was to send a messenger to Day-kau-ray, to apprise him of the outrage she had received at the hand of Tshah-nee-kah.

Logan saw that all his precautions had been in vain. She would learn all that had happened, even to its most heart-rending particulars, as soon as she put foot among the people of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah. And so it was.

After a conference with a group of the elders of the band, she rejoined her travelling companions with a mien as if struck by a mortal blow. She again took her place in the cavalcade, which, according to custom, proceeded in single file along the narrow beaten trail across hill, valley, and prairie. Never once during the livelong day did she break the silence, except in reply to some question or remark prompted by Logan's solicitude, or by that of old Michaud, to whom the grief of his master's daughter was almost as if it were that of an angel from the skies.

Thus they continued their way through the following day, when, just as evening was closing in, they reached the outskirts of the settlement.

"If you will have the goodness to take me to the house

of the Reverend M. St. Vrain, I shall be greatly obliged," said Miss McGregor, briefly.

Logan directed the steps of the party towards the dwelling of the good priest and his sister.

"Perhaps I had better send on Michaud, to let your father know we will be there presently," he suggested.

"No; if you please, you will be the bearer of my message to my father and sister. I shall not see them again; but do not pain them by telling them so, just yet. Beg them, if you please, to leave me to myself, until they hear again from me. As soon as I feel able to write, I will do so."

"At least they may send you some changes of clothing," said the thoughtful young man, as he gazed with compassion on her strange attire. She had, it is true, discarded the vile garment which Tshah-nee-kah had thrown around her, but the severity of the weather had made her glad to accept a similar though more cleanly wrapping from the stores which Michaud had provided. Her hood, in which she had lain crushed for two days among the mud and snow in the bottom of the canoe, her light party dress soiled, draggled, and hanging limp about her heels, her hair, all unconscious of a comb since the hour when she had made her toilet for the dance at Madame Jarrot's, together presented a spectacle of melancholy, almost beggarly, discomfort.

"Ah, yes! if you will be so good," she replied to the suggestion of the bourgeois. "Miss Rosalie is so *petite* that I should not be able to wear her clothes. Ask my sister to send me what will answer for me till to-morrow. Mind that you say till to-morrow, if you please."

With these few words, she entered the door of her reverend friend, and left Logan to proceed to the mansion of Mr. McGregor with the story of his success.

CHAPTER XCI.

MRS. HOLCOMB, to whom the abduction of Miss McGregor had furnished a valuable topic of comment and conjecture, while circulating around the whole range of the officers' quarters to detail all she had heard and all she suspected, was not remiss in hastening to offer her condolences to the sorrowing sister.

It was in vain that her cousin Grace endeavored to convince her that, under such trying circumstances, the visits of any but their nearest friends would be an intrusion. Mrs. Holcomb was not to be repelled; and Madeleine, who disliked the idea of closing her doors against their little world, was obliged to suffer a daily torrent of question and gossip which were now more than ever distasteful.

"Come, now, you must let me cheer you up a little," the obtrusive lady cried, as she entered the parlor on the fourth day of Logan's absence. "I cannot have you brooding and fretting in this way. I have come furnished with a new stock of ammunition, as we say in the army, and I shall make you welcome to my first cartridge." And the lady laughed in enjoyment of her own wit. "Grace, did I tell you about Bumble-bee Banks?"

"Bumble-bee Banks! No. What place is that?"

"Not a place at all, you simple child, but an officer,—Captain Banks! His Christian name was Van Bummell. I knew him when we were stationed at the Harbor.* He was only a lieutenant then; and partly for his name,—I hope he got a fortune with it,—partly because he was for-

* Sackett's Harbor.

ever going about buzzing and buzzing pretty things into the ears of the girls, not omitting the married ladies either" (with a self-complacent nod), "we gave him this nickname. He buzzed to some purpose; for he stung the heart of a very pretty girl in the town there, who had lots of money, and used to try to outshine us all with her silks and her satins and her laces. The poor thing didn't live long, with all her finery!"

"I remember Monica wrote me about the death of a Mrs. Banks soon after they arrived here last spring."

"Yes, and—would you believe it?—her husband went down to Fort Armstrong two months ago, and married a niece of the sutler's down there, an ignorant little body, that he fancied looked like his dear Abby. I suppose he married her out of respect to Abby's memory!"

"Oh, Edith, what an idea!"

"I have not a doubt of it; and—whether out of respect for dear Abby or out of stinginess I can't say—he has given her all his first wife's clothes, and this morning she was parading round the garrison, returning her wedding-calls, in poor Abby's best hat and new broadcloth cloak! Did you ever hear anything to beat that?"

"It was strange," said Madeleine, with a look of absence; "but perhaps the poor thing had nothing else to make an appearance in."

"Of course she hadn't. She was a poor niece that the sutler brought out to 'swap off,' as the polite young gentlemen say. Well, this has taught me one lesson. If anything is ever likely to happen to me, I shall have all my best things packed up at once and directed to my father; and I shall send them to the quartermaster myself, with orders to have them forwarded without another person's presuming to lay a finger upon them. No parading round in my finery by any second Mrs. Charlie Holcomb. I

should grit my teeth at the very idea, if I had been dead a month!"

"If anything was likely to happen to you, as you express it, depend upon it, Edith, your wardrobe would be the least of your concern," said her cousin.

"I don't know—it always has been the first thing," said Mrs. Holcomb, with charming simplicity. "A poorly-dressed woman is as much my aversion as a poorly-dressed dinner is my husband's. He sometimes intimates that if he has to put up with the one I shall have to put up with the other; but, thanks to dear, generous papa, that is a matter beyond his control."

Seeing that Madeleine manifested little interest in the subject she had started, Mrs. Holcomb turned to other topics of garrison news,—a soldier drummed round the parade-ground with half his head shaved and one sleeve cut off, for an attempt to desert. "The most comical figure you ever saw!" she declared.

"And you saw him?" her cousin inquired.

"Certainly—why not? What is there to amuse us in the garrison if we shut our eyes on the public performances? It was as good as a play to see poor little Smithett's teeth chatter and his eyes roll, as he asked what would happen if an officer was away without leave and got caught. I told him I rather thought they would put on his uniform upside down, and stand him on his head in the middle of the parade. I don't believe he slept a wink that night for thinking of it."

Mrs. Holcomb spun out her visit as long as decency would permit, until, finding that no invitation to stay and finish the evening was proffered, for Madeleine was aware of her father's positive dislike to the silly, chattering woman, she at length took her leave. It was nearly dark. Madeleine had given orders to put off tea to a

little beyond the usual hour, for she had a constant hope, amounting almost to an expectation, of hearing a rap at the door, and seeing the travelling party enter, her sister foremost among them.

After Mrs. Holcomb's departure, she went to the library to announce to her father and Mr. Lindsay that the parlor was again free for them to enjoy, all together, a chat around the bright, cheerful fire.

"Now we will see who shall be the first one to hear their rap at the door!" she said, cheerily; but no rap came, and it happened in this way.

Cateesh, in her impatience, had gone, for the fourth or fifth time, to gaze from the front steps in the direction that the returning party must approach. She was still standing, peering forth, when Logan came upon her suddenly. As he was alone, she did not immediately recognize him in his wrappings; but at his first word of salutation she flew in before him, throwing open the parlor-door with the announcement,—

"Voici Monsieur Mark!"

"We have brought her back, sir," cried Logan, then suddenly stopped.

Mr. Lindsay had sprung from his seat at the first sound of salutation. He seemed for a moment transfixed as he gazed at the young man in his heavy capote, his face all aglow with exercise and excitement.

Logan likewise stood still—it was but for a moment. With a hurried step forward the father opened his arms, and in an instant the two were locked in each other's embrace.

"My son, my son!" "And am I, then, forgiven?" were but the signals for a renewed embrace and a more hearty hand-shaking.

Mr. McGregor, filled with amazement, could only utter,—

"How is this? How is this? Let me understand it! Logan and Malcolm the same? Mallie, why was I not told of this? But what, my little lassie! Crying? What is that for?"

"They are not tears of grief," said Madeleine, smiling. "But where is Monica? I do not see her here," she asked, anxiously, and turning away to hide the embarrassment caused by Mr. Lindsay's searching glance.

Logan—or, as we must now say, Malcolm—explained that had left Miss McGregor with Miss Rosalie, and, as he added that she had received from the Indians whom they met on their way some communication which appeared to have depressed her spirits, her determination to remain all night with friends of her own faith occasioned no surprise to those who easily divined the cause of her depression.

"But come; explain all this other matter to me!" said Mr. McGregor, as soon as he had heard a hasty summary of the journey in search of his daughter, as well as the particulars of her abduction. "Let me understand how Malcolm came to be Logan, and how it happened, my young friend, that you informed me you were an Irishman!"

"Pardon me, sir, not an Irishman, but a native of Ireland. I drew my first breath, as I have been told, at the house of my mother's sister, in the neighborhood of Lough Neagh. And I made use of that fortunate circumstance to mystify those from whom I wished to conceal my identity."

"Ah, I see, I see! Still, there seems no reason why you should not have made yourself known to me after your arrival here."

"And after you were aware of my wish for your return," added his father; "for I am informed by my friend

here that you have aided him in his inquiries for my missing son."

Malcolm smiled.

"Yes," he said, "I did not find him, because—well—because he was not yet quite ready to be found. But to answer your question, sir," to Mr. McGregor; "I had commenced a career, thanks to our good Patterson at Lachine, and there was the natural pride of winning a position for myself. But, first of all——" He hesitated, and looked towards Madeleine.

"You may speak out, my boy," said his father. "It is all right, if you can but win this dear little girl's heart. Her father's approbation you have already secured, I find, bourgeois though you were and without friends or patrimony. I have been very jealous, I assure you, of this young Logan, for my son Malcolm's sake. I thought he had stolen your sweetheart from you. I must forgive her for leaving me for three days in this wretched state of anxiety, which she might have relieved," he said, looking a little reproachfully at Madeleine. "And now I must ask formally, in your behalf, the hand which you had undertaken to win without my aid."

Malcolm was by Madeleine's side before his father had half finished his speech; for the kind and benignant smile of Mr. McGregor told him all that words of affection and gratitude were not slow in confirming.

The more minute features of his journey were, after a time, related by young Lindsay, in answer to the anxious questions of Mr. McGregor, who was still lost in conjectures as to the meaning of the outrage, Monica having carefully abstained from naming any participator except the old chief and his son, the Black Otter.

Before the party assembled at the tea-table, "the bour-

geois was presented to Miss Latimer by his own name, Mr. McGregor adding the explanation,—

"My future son-in-law, as we hope, Miss Grace. What! you hear this with surprise? Has not Mallie made a confidante of you?"

"Madeleine has kept as much of her secret as she was able," said Miss Latimer, smiling. "I suppose upon one point neither her own friends nor those of Mr. Lindsay were very much in the dark. I had not, however, the slightest suspicion that this young gentleman was her friend Malcolm, about whom I was inclined to rally her in the early days of our acquaintance; and I must admit that I was not a little disappointed at finding, on my arrival here, that my friend did not possess that degree of constancy that I consider essential to a perfect character. At the same time, I cannot deny that an acquaintance with Mr. Logan inclined me to make allowances."

Malcolm bowed.

"I was always afraid," said he, "that your keen eye might detect the imposture. I have had no secrets from Ewing; and I have from time to time set him to watch, to detect whether you had any suspicion of the truth; but Madeleine seems to have been always upon her guard."

"Not always," replied Miss Latimer. "Once, in speaking of something that happened in Quebec, she mentioned her friend Clara's addressing her brother with, 'Now, Mark, this will never do.' It came out so naturally that it puzzled me, particularly as she did not correct herself, nor look conscious, as I rather thought she ought, after such a mistake. Had I not been informed that Mr. Logan was an Irishman, I should have perhaps, as we say in my own country, put that and that together."

"It was a most natural inadvertence," said Lindsay. "I was more frequently called Mark by her and my sister

than by my full name. They took the abbreviation from the peculiar manner in which a relative of my father's used to pronounce my name. I was something of a favorite with the old lady, and when she was on a visit to us it would be Cousin Mah-colm this and Cousin Mah-colm that, from morning till night, until at length the girls fell into the habit of contracting my name to one syllable; and I was Mark with Miss Madeleine long before I added the Logan."

They were a cheerful, almost a merry party around the parlor fire that evening. Only upon Malcolm's spirits lay a weight, caused by the mysterious words of Miss McGregor at their parting. His occasional silence and abstraction being, however, attributed by the others to fatigue and the effects of his cold and hurried journey, they were permitted to pass without remark.

Mr. McGregor would have had his young friend take up his quarters at once under his roof, but from this he excused himself until he should have notified Madame Tremblay of his contemplated change of abode.

"The good lady will be vexed, I am afraid, at losing still another boarder from her table," said Mr. McGregor.

"Another?" inquired Malcolm.

"Have I not mentioned to you that Jerome went off in the boats which started for Lake Pepin the day after you left? He asked leave to take his brother Napoleon's place, and, for several reasons, I thought the change would be for our advantage, if not for his."

"I am glad he is gone," said Malcolm, briefly, and changed the subject.

In the hour which the young man spent in his father's apartment before taking leave of him for the night, he received the leading particulars of his darling's history, and learned that which Madeleine had already been apprised

of by her father,—the relationship, namely, which she actually held to one whom she had loved as a mother, and also the causes, we will not say *reasons*, of her sister's want of fraternal tenderness towards her.

"Madeleine shed many tears, her father told me, over the unhappy histories of her mother and step-mother," pursued Mr. Lindsay. "She now understands why her sister ever rejected the affection she was anxious to manifest towards her. She thinks it not unnatural that the sight of her mother's unhappiness should have thus embittered her feelings. I, for my part, make no such allowances. Miss McGregor knew that her sister was in no way the cause of her mother's sorrows, except by the mere fact of her existence. One thing is clear to my mind, my son—that your Madeleine is an angel—and if you are not happy in your married life, it will be your own fault."

CHAPTER XCII.

MADELEINE, on receiving from Logan her sister's message, had promptly dispatched such articles of her wardrobe as would be most for her comfort, accompanied by a note expressive of the tenderest and most grateful feelings at her deliverance from peril and suffering. She had not, however, the satisfaction of a line in return; a simple message of thanks was all.

She was in the library with her father on the following morning, anxiously awaiting the summons which they had been led to expect, or possibly the reappearance of Monica in her own home, when a letter was brought to Mr. Mc-

Gregor which plunged both father and daughter in the deepest distress. Its contents were as follows:—

"My Father,—From the depths of humiliation and contrition I write to bid you farewell.

"I have run my race in a vain world! I have been tried by temptation—I have failed and made miserable shipwreck. Henceforth there is only left for me the effort to live for God, if he will accept the offering of my remaining time and talents, hitherto so sadly misused.

"I will not pain the author of my being by a rehearsal of my short-comings, and of my misdeeds which have prevailed against me. My eyes are opened to perceive that these had their root in a jealousy of one who gave me, from her childhood upward, no reason to regard her with other feelings than those of affection. When I think of all that I planned for her hurt, I can only magnify the wisdom of God in defeating my schemes, and causing the mischief designed for another to fall upon my own head. And he has dealt me in rebuke a blow still more severe; but of that I desire not to speak, so mighty is the anguish caused by its contemplation!

"It is my desire to retire into the Convent of Santa Anna, of which my mother's cousin is the Lady Superior.

"She will receive me without a dowry beyond the small annuity to which, as my mother's representative, I am entitled. My feeble talents will, if diligently employed, secure me from being a burden upon the little community.

"I am aware that, from the unhappy circumstances of my birth, I have no claim in the inheritance of your descendants; my mother ever mourned that by her persistent rejection of your offers and entreaties she sealed my fate in that respect, and left me to stand as an alien. Yet, if you could find it in your heart, in remembrance of her

subsequent devotion, to appropriate a small sum annually, to be expended in the support of orphans, or other charities of the community to which I shall belong, it would call down a blessing from others besides your unhappy daughter.

"My father, I bid you farewell with feelings of gratitude,—to you, for your unvarying kindness through my perverse life, and to my sister, for all that she has borne with from me.

"Now that I am to see her no more, it comes upon me with clearest force, how loving and gentle and forbearing she has ever been, and how happy might have been my lot had I not suffered my mind to be poisoned by my overweening devotion to my mother's people. From these has come my punishment!

"Every hope blasted, every scheme defeated, henceforth there only remains for me to make my peace with Heaven, and by a life of penitence, mortification, and good deeds, to atone as far as I may for the miserable past.

"Farewell, my father! farewell, my sister! until we meet in a land where sin is forgiven and sorrow forgotten.

"Your unhappy

"MONICA."

To order the calèche and proceed to the house of Father St. Vrain, was the work of a very few minutes to Mr. McGregor.

He preferred to leave Madeleine behind, believing that Monica might be more easily won to receive a visit from himself alone. He was perplexed to understand her letter. That she had tried to injure her sister, and that the mischief had recoiled on herself, was the obvious meaning of her words. But how?

Logan had intimated a conviction that Madeleine was the one to have been carried off. Gracious Heaven! could

Monica have had any part in such a scheme? Oh, no, no!—the idea was too horrible.

He endeavored to dismiss the subject from his mind as he entered the priest's humble dwelling and inquired for his daughter. Vain, however, were all his efforts to obtain an interview.

"She has taken her leave of this world," said the good ecclesiastic, "and is now before the altar, where she has been ever since her letter to you, and where she desires to remain, undisturbed, for yet a certain number of hours. Only assure her of your fatherly forgiveness, my dear sir, and you give your daughter all the consolation which she can receive from outward things. Let me, further, convey to her your approbation of the step she meditates——"

"No, no—not that," said Mr. McGregor. "I totally disapprove—that is, I cannot consent that she should bind herself by irrevocable vows. Of any offence such as my daughter charges herself with, I am profoundly ignorant. Whatever may be its nature, I fully and freely forgive her. And if she chooses to retire for a season from the world, that she may give herself to meditation and prayer, that is well; she shall have the means to benefit to a generous extent the community which receives her as a guest. But I cannot sanction my daughter's flying from known duties in pursuit of any chimera of devotion or benevolence. Let her seek for a season, then, all the consolation that solitude and religious observances will give her; after that, let her return to the home and the duties which God has assigned her. She must not expect my consent to any seclusion beyond that."

"But, then, she will be very unhappy," pleaded the curé, with a piteous look. "Your daughter has had great troubles, her life has not been a cheerful one, and it may be that there are abroad in this naughty world those who are

watching to do her harm. Who would deny an asylum of holy rest to one so stricken? If there have been sins of omission and commission, (and whose record is free from such?) is it not the part of wise and kind friends to smooth the path of penitence and peace?"

There was something quite irresistible in the tender pathos of the priest's appeal. Mr. McGregor answered it only in part.

"My daughter has my leave to enter a convent for a time," he said. "As to her burying herself for the remainder of her days, I must put a veto on such a step, at least until months of calm reflection have convinced her that such a course is most in conformity with the path God has marked out for her."

Mr. McGregor hastily penned a few lines to his daughter, expressive of the views he had announced to her spiritual director, and urging her to return to the embrace of her father and sister, who loved her and desired her happiness. But Monica's resolution remained unshaken. She wished not to meet Madeleine, even though she believed her unaware of the extent of the evil she had plotted against her. She suspected that the bourgeois had divined or been informed of much that she would blush to have known; and she feared to face Jerome. Heretofore, in contemplating the possibility that young Tremblay, in his wrath at the discovery of her treachery to himself, would proclaim her complicity in her sister's abduction, she had laid the flattering unction to her soul that the Red Bird would, ere that moment could arrive, be released and she far away with him, beyond the ken of all who might blame or disparage. Now, there was not a single hope to stand between her and an accusing world; there was, therefore, more than simple grief, or disappointment, or disgust with her lot, to hurry her away.

She accepted her father's half-way permission, and the liberal addition to her purse which accompanied it, and, by the intervention of the kind-hearted priest, secured a passage in the steamer which was to leave for St. Louis the ensuing evening.

It was Madeleine whose pleadings won from her father, in process of time, consent for her sister to take the veil. She could well understand that since Monica had been disappointed in her early love, and had afterwards suffered so heart-rending a grief as the suicide of the Red Bird, the scenes in which these trials had occurred, as well as all associations connected with them, would induce feelings of bitterness and woe. She could fancy Monica tranquil and comparatively happy in the discharge of her self-imposed duties, but not otherwise than brooding and miserable in a sphere where she had never been more than tolerably cheerful.

For these reasons, strengthened by an unexpected and earnest concurrence on the part of Malcolm, she urged her father to place no bar to the execution of her sister's cherished plans; and, having succeeded in overcoming his opposition, she added a munificent benefaction of her own to the appropriation already set apart by him for the benefit of those in whose behalf Monica's labors were henceforward to be directed.

CHAPTER XCIII.

MR. LINDSAY was anxious that the marriage of his son with the daughter of his friend should be celebrated at once, and that the newly-married couple should return with him to Quebec. To the latter proposal, however, Mr. McGregor gave a decided negative.

"I cannot give up my little Mallie at a moment's warning," he said. "She is all that is left me now. And besides, Logan," he added, smiling, "you are not yet out of your time. 'For a year from date,' your indentures run, if I mistake not."

"Yes," replied the young man; "and 'not to commit matrimony within that time,'* is another stipulation. What shall we do, Mallie?"

"We shall have to send for Judge Badeau and get him to put the papers in the stove," said Madeleine, merrily, recalling the judge's sentence of divorce, as Malcolm had described it to her, and as he now again related it for the amusement of his father.

It was finally settled that there should be no delay of the marriage-ceremony, beyond that short period which young ladies, by common consent, declare to be indispensable.

That the wedding should be a very quiet one, was equally the preference of all concerned.

Very loud and general was the outcry with which the announcement of this feature in the arrangements was

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* Such were the conditions in the indentures of the Company's clerks.

received in the circle of acquaintance, both civil and military.

"If McGregor happened to have six other daughters to marry off and give entertainments for, like M. Tremblay, par exemple," exclaimed that gentleman's spouse, "the case would be different."

"Toutefois—a wedding is not a funeral, voyez-vous," chimed in Madame Jarrot. "Keeping the sister in remembrance is all very well—that dear, sanctified Monique!" Madame Tremblay shrugged her shoulders. "But is she not gone, I pray you, to be the bride of Heaven? And should not that be a cause for rejoicing, not for putting on mourning? Ah! well, we shall see very different doings when that excellent Jerome has made his modest little quelqu'chose and comes back to claim his fiancée. *There* is a young man *comme il faut!* Taking his pack and plunging into the wilderness for the sake of her he loves! After that, the wedding! For a wedding *is* a wedding, ma chère Domitile, and not a funeral!"

Mrs. Holcomb protested loudly against the shabbiness of a bridal from which one's friends were excluded.

"I do not say that the *canaille* should be invited, but the aristocracy of the army are certainly entitled to such an attention. The McGregors are standing very much in their own light. One would suppose they would wish to appear popular, and of some consequence in the eyes of this young man's father, who, they say, has a daughter married to a nobleman. Whereas, they are putting it out of the power of other people to give them any *éclat*. I had quite made up my mind to borrow Mrs. Captain Banks's parlor and Mrs. Dr. Given's handsome china tea-set and give a little fandango myself, just to compliment them. There is a man in Holcomb's company who plays the fiddle—I could have had him for them to dance by—

and I could have coaxed little Smart out of any amount of good things to help do honor to the young lady she is so fond of. But, of course, all such plans are at an end now."

Lieutenant Smithett wished it to be understood that "things were never conducted in this sort of way in Bowling-green Place. He was astonished that, after the elder sister had been carried off in that disreputable way, the family should not see how necessary it was to keep themselves up to the mark in gentility by cultivating the notice of people who had seen something of society! He did not suppose that that Lady Something that Mrs. Holcomb was speaking of, could be particularly proud of her brother hereafter, if she ever found out what a very inferior position he had been in! And, above all things, she must feel dreadfully if she should hear that he had married into a family where one member had been carried off by Indians!"

The feelings of the little community were in this state of ferment when Madeleine walked down to the magasin one morning to make some purchases. She found Mrs. Smart there upon the same errand.

"It seems as if I ought to find everything I want at the shanty," she said, "but I don't, always, so I come over here. I hope you didn't think it was unfeelingness that I didn't come near you in your trouble. I thought of you enough; but I've lived a good while in the world, and I've learnt better than to run plunging myself in on people that's in affliction. When I can't mend, I won't mar—that's my idea of kindness."

"I am very sure you thought of us and felt for us," said Madeleine.

"That's what I did; and there's not one person, yourselves always excepted, that's more proud and glad to

think things has turned out right between you and Mr. Logan."

"Thank you," said Madeleine. "You were always his friend, I know."

"Yes, I was. I could always see that he was a gentleman, though not in his right place. Now, a down-trodden gentleman is my delight. I do so like to lend them a helping hand—ask Smart if I don't. It's too bad, though, that we don't happen to be in a country where there's a church, where I could go and see you stand up side by side, as I always hoped I should, some day! But you must take my good wishes all the same; and may you be just as happy as you deserve to be!"

"And would it really give you pleasure to see us married?" said Madeleine, touched by the good lady's affectionate warmth and by the tears that she could not quite keep back, even while she puckered her mouth into a smile.

"Pleasure? Bless your dear little heart! that wouldn't begin to tell how I should feel. You've both been so good to me; and I've always been keeping my eye on the *keevee*, as my Corbin says, for fear Old Nick was a going, somehow, to put his cloven foot into the business. I guess there's nobody but your two papas that would be so glad as I should, to see it carried out with my own eyes."

Madeleine understood Mrs. Smart's involved assurances as they were intended, and responded to them by the gratifying remark,—

"If you care so much about seeing me married to your Mr. Boo-joo, whose right name happens to be Lindsay and not Logan, I shall certainly send you an invitation as soon as the day is fixed."

"And won't you just let me make you a pyramid of wedding-cake—just as a last favor to me, after so many?

I can assure you I shall do my very best; and that is saying something," cried the enthusiastic little dame.

Madeleine promised to accept her present, and left her in a state little short of beatitude.

Having given this invitation, Madeleine found that she must of necessity depart from her original plan and include all the rest of the world.

"And, after all, as one is married but once," said Malcolm, "why not gratify those who have been so kind and civil to us? I, for my part, quite agree with Madame Jarrot, whose opinion was given with great frankness to Ewing last evening, 'A wedding is a wedding, and not a funeral.'"

Jerome did not return for his fiancée, after having made his "modest little *quelqu'chose.*" He took to himself a soft-eyed little Yankton partner, with whom he very frequently made himself merry over the trick he had played on a false fair one, only lamenting (the Ho-tshung-rah!) that his revenge had been nipped in the bud, and not carried out to one-half the extent of what he had concerted with the relatives of Wau-nig-sootsh-kah.

That Ewing and Miss Latimer, either before or after having officiated as groomsman and bridesmaid, should have made the discovery that they were as well suited to each other as were Malcolm and Madeleine, will astonish no one.

It did not surprise Mrs. Holcomb. She "had always known that Grace meant to pick up a beau if she could." She "did not imagine it was exactly for that that papa undertook to send her that long journey at his own expense; but of course he would think it all right. Whatever Grace did was right." She "wondered if he would think he must give her a wedding outfit; and, if he did, whether that would make any difference in the amount he might set apart for her, for her year's allowance!"

Any plans that Mrs. Holcomb might have gossipped over, of testifying to Mr. Lindsay, senior, the tolerance with which the "aristocracy of the army" were disposed to regard his new daughter-in-law, were cut short by the movements of the parties most concerned.

"La Prairie" having naturally become to the McGregor circle a less cheerful abode than it had been in months past, it was decided to take advantage of the Saint Martin, or Indian Summer, and pass the months which should intervene before spring, in the pleasant region where Madeleine's worldly possessions chiefly centred.

In her mother's Kentucky home, on the banks of the beautiful Ohio, there were still a few of the ancient retainers who could discourse about pretty Miss Madie, so long lost, and for such a brief, sad season restored; and in the neighborhood were to be found more than one old friend of the family, whose delight it was to recall, for the gratification of the daughter's filial sensibilities, every little particular of the object of so much tender interest.

And hardly less was their satisfaction in listening to all she could be tempted to impart of the varied incidents of her young life; especially in gleaning from her every particular of the "wonderful and romantic history" of her finding, all unforewarned, the well-born and carefully educated young gentleman who had won her girlish affections, earning his pay and homely rations, for her sake, in an Indian outfit, under the name and style of

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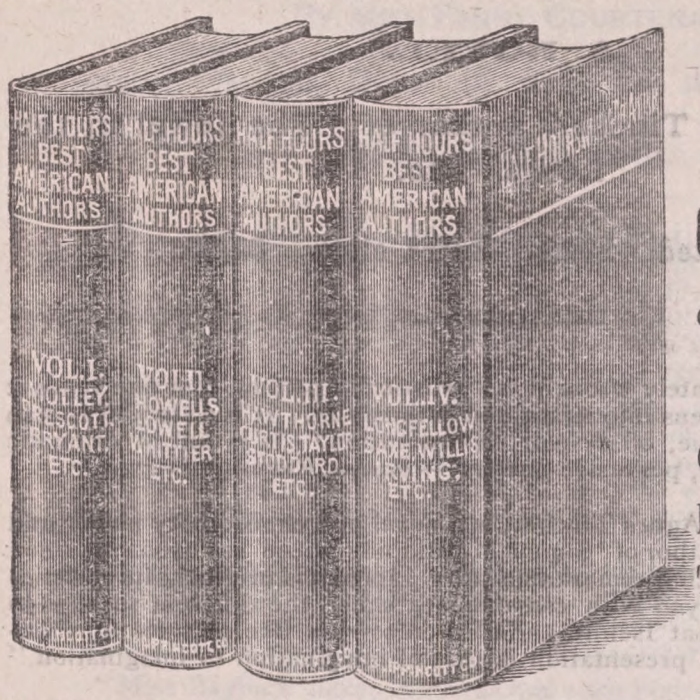
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